

New York City Town Hall Meeting
October 19, 2006
Hunter College Kaye Playhouse
(Transcript)
(Part 1)

AUDIENCE: *[laughter]*

MODERATOR: Yes... We can't have those ringing right here as we speak. Thank you very much for doing that. Uh... I just want to say very special thanks to the number of people who have made this possible: in addition to our organizing uh... effort, uh... definitely the National Association of Hispanic Journalists is one of the key organizers along with the National Institute for Latino Policy. And uh... also... we want to thank those that, uh... without a doubt, we would not have uh... been able to organize so many details that are involved in this, and that is Free Press and we thank them dearly. All those volunteers that have been ushering and that have been guiding you around, absolutely and without a doubt uh... are... are just... we are very, very grateful. I also want to give special thanks particularly to CUNY and the City University of New York, the Senior Chancellor uh... for University Relations, the Secretary of the Board of Trustees Jay Hershenson, and **Luz Jimenez** uh... uh... who's from the office of the University Relations, at Hunter College the President Jennifer Raab, and the Assistant Provost and Rit... Vice President **Vita Ravanovich** who will, in a second, be here with us to give us her welcoming remarks. She's also uh... the External Affairs Coordinator, uh... **Taina**... I'm sorry: we also want to thank **Taina** uh... **Barrero**... **Borrero**, who is the External Affairs Coordinator, who has been extraordinarily uh... helpful as well, the Center for uh... Estudios Puertorriqueños here at Hunter, who also uh...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

MODERATOR: Uh, that sounds nice!

AUDIENCE: *[laughter]*

MODERATOR: ... who... who... uh... organized the uh... reception that we just came from, and also our colleagues at Manhattan Neighborhood Network and uh... who, again, were just extraordinary in getting the word out. There's special thanks also to Reach Hip Hop - you guys there in the audience? Well, how about them, to see them in action...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

MODERATOR: *[unintelligible]* oh, here they are, uh... Common Cause, Media in Democracy Coalition, and the Prometheus Radio Project who again MADE THIS POSSIBLE.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

MODERATOR: I want to quickly uh... call to the stage Vita Ra... Rawinowitz - and I'm sorry, I practiced it and there I went again! - uh... to the stage who will give us the welcoming remarks. Vita?

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

VITA RAWINOWITZ: Thank you, Marta. Good evening. On behalf of President Jennifer Raab, I am delighted to greet members of the National Hispanic Media Coalition, the National Latino Media Council, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, the National Institute for Latino Policy in partnership with Free Press, Federal Communications Commissioners John... Jonathan Adelstein and Michael Copps, members of the media, and other honored guests of Hunter College. As members of the largest college in the largest urban public university in the nation, we at Hunter College are immensely proud to host this public hearing on diversity in the broadcast industry and to offer the public an opportunity to discuss the media's treatment of people of color. As many of you know, Hunter College is a minority serving institution: well over one third of our degree seeking freshmen come from underrepresented minority groups, and almost 22% of all freshmen are of Hispanic descent. We are home to Centro, the renowned Center for Puerto Rican Studies. Hunter's students come from 150 different countries and speak almost a hundred different languages. 34% of our incoming freshmen are born outside of the U.S., and 66% of our new freshmen speak a language other than English at home. A big part of our mission is now, and has always been, preparing our students from all over the world to succeed academically, professionally, socially, and personally in our society. Given our student body, we cannot fulfill that mission without an abiding appreciation of, and respect for, diversity including ethnic and language diversity. At Hunter diversity is truly the air that we breathe, and cultural awareness and cultural competence are major goals of our education. It is the duty of great institutions to facilitate and stimulate discussions on the great issues of their times, no matter how sensitive or controversial. It is right that we provide a forum tonight to discuss such matters as the right of people to receive and exchange ideas, the powerful influences of the media on our culture, the forces of media consolidation, and the low levels of media ownership among women and people of color. How do we balance the right to free speech and exchange of ideas, the demands of competitive marketplace, and the needs and concerns of local communities? These are just some of the big issues you will be grappling with here tonight. I want to thank you for coming to Hunter College over these important issues, and I hope you enjoy your evening. Thank you for having me.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 1: *[unintelligible]*

MODERATOR: Guess what, guys: I pronounced her name correctly. Huh! OK, would uh... Now I want to introduce Ivan Roman who is the Executive Director of the National Association of Hispanic Journalist *[sic]* - Ivan?

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

MODERATOR: ... who will do the intros.

[unintelligible]

IVAN ROMAN: Good evening, everyone. I want to welcome all of you here on behalf of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, an organization of 2,000 members from all types of media in the country. We are here to discuss possible media ownership rule changes that will have a tremendous impact on the information, and the news, and the entertainment that our society receives. We at NHJ *[sic]* see the effects of media consolidation firsthand. We hear of layoffs and buyouts all the time. Just this week, 65 members of the Cleveland Plain Dealer staff was offered a buyout uh... took a buyout offer. And, just today, we hear news of 700 people who will be laid off at NBC Universal. We still don't know if any of these are affected... news divisions are affected by this, but basically this phenomenon results in increased lack of diversity, of viewpoints, fewer reporters actually covering the news, digging for stories. We are also concerned about minority ownership: we asked the National Telecommunications Information Agency to conduct a study on the status of minority ownership, a study they had not done since December of 2000 and that they had just... forgotten to do! Of course they said no this year, which shocked us and just shows how they have abdicated their responsibility to monitor and foster greater uh... minority ownership in media. So our friends at Free Press, spurred by this no that was given to NHJ *[sic]*, decided to do the study themselves, and they documented how the impa... the impact of media consolidation on minority ownership. Of 1,400 tele... television broadcast stations in the country, 67 stations are owned by women: that's 5%. Minorities own 44 stations: that's 3.26%. Blacks own 18 stations: that's 1.3%. Hispanics own 15 stations: that's 1.1%. Asians own 6 stations: that's less than 1%. And uh... the only station owned uh... by a person of color in New York area is an Asian station, WMBC - which is UHF... UHF station. Faced with these results, NHJ *[sic]* reiterated and strengthened our position to media ownership rule changes that would result in fewer jobs, less quality coverage, fewer voices, fewer viewpoints, and fewer owners of color. We've documented the inverse with NHJ's *[sic]* party project, which shows that having more people of color as owner and decision making positions results in better and more inclusive coverage. Our network brownout study released today, as some of you may have seen uh... an executive summary, which is out in the front, helps document how the lack of viewpoints in newsrooms affects coverage. Of 12,600 stories that appeared on ABC News, CBS News, NBC News in all of 2006, 105 stories or less than 1% were stories about Latinos or stories that included Latinos. In essence we are in... basically invisible except when we are highlighted as criminals. That's what the study found. As an example, the story about Alberto Gonzales being appointed Attorney General: in all of those stories not one Latino was interviewed for those stories, to see... to get their opinion, to see how it affected Latinos, what Latinos thought about it, how it affects Latinos in politics. Not one, and that was just an easy like... sort of like a... you could say, kind of an obvious thing to do. They didn't even do that! So... we at NHJ *[sic]* are opposed to further rule changes and deregulation, which has a real impact on how we are seen and heard, and the level of respect afforded to us in this society. That's why as

Latinos and journalist [*sic*] we must stand against these changes. Let's all remember that the deadline for public comments to the FCC about proposed changes is December 21st and you can go... you can do this by going to www.stopbigmedia.com: I'm sorry, www.stopbigmedia.com: we expect to see you there and I now leave you with... Once again I want to thank you all for coming, I want to thank the volunteers who really helped get this together for us, and I want to now leave you with Alex Nogales, President and CEO of the National Hispanic Media Coalition, who will serve as moderator of the first panel. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Buenas tardes a todos, I'm gonna put this a little higher for myself here. Uh... we have a lot of work to do this evening. Welcome again: I am Alex Nogales, President and CEO of the National Hispanic Media Coalition. I am also the Secretary for the National Latino Media Council, which is the much larger umbrella organization consisting of 17 of the largest civil rights advocacy organizations across the nation [*unintelligible*] Latino. Let me tell you what you can expect this evening so you'll know exactly what we are going to do. In a moment I am going to introduce the Commissioners who are going to come up and give us their comments. Thereafter, what I will do is introduce our panelists: we have two panels today. I'll introduce the first panel: they will have five minutes a piece to give us their testimony. And then I will come to you, the public: we have uh... two microphones and I will ask uh... certain people to come up first, uh... elected officials and so forth. We will take testimony for half an hour and then we will go to the second panel: is that a... agreeable to everybody?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 2: Yes.

ALEX NOGALES: Muy bien. Muchas gracias. Pr... First of all let me point out that all the five Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission were invited to be with us this evening and, of course, uh... three of them did not show up [*clearing his voice*]. The two that always show up and - I have to emphasize this - the two Democrats of the FCC, and they are...

AUDIENCE: [*applause and whistling*]

ALEX NOGALES: There are two very loyal, very caring, very professional individuals who... give us much service, and they are here this evening to take testimony from all of us so our concerns are going to be on the public record! This will go on the public record! It is my pleasure to introduce to you Commissioner Copps, immediately here to my left...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: ... and Commissioner Adelstein, immediately to his left.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: So, again, I will ask him to... say a few words and... Commissioner Adelstein, if you will come up first?

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Uh... Thank you, Alex, for that fine introduction and all of the organizers here that did so much work that [*unintelligible*] put their heart and soul into making this possible. And, of course, I want to thank uh... all of you for being here. It's a fantastic turnout we have this evening, which I think is a testament to how important this issue is to this community, and... we are really here for YOU, so I'm glad that you came here to share with us. Uh... me alegre de estar con ustedes en Nueva York. It's a pleasure to be here in New York. Uh... It's wonderful to participate in such a democratic exercise of this community because the FCC doesn't always do this. Historically we haven't gone out, but I think we should and find out what people are thinking around the country and we are not...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 3: Bravo!

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Of course it's especially great for you to come out during game 7 of the Divisional Championships...

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Well, I know it's especially hard for Betty Ellen - we appreciate her - a huge Met fan, uh... Mets fan, and the thing is that we didn't plan it this way: the rain delay caused this so don't blame us. But I... I can't think of a better way to really determine the public interest than to go out of Washington and find out what the public is thinking about these issues, listen to your views about what's happening to local media and how well it's serving you, and what effects the wave of consolidation that we've seen has had on you because, unlike the powerful media companies in Washington, you don't have an army of highly paid lobbyists that are out there to represent YOUR interest. But, then again, why should you? You really shouldn't need highly paid lobbyists in Washington because, supposedly, that's the job of the FCC! But, of course, that would only be the case if we truly carried out the law, which requires us to serve the public interest and not the huge media giants who seek to profit by using the public airwaves.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: I think it's unfortunate in recent years that the FCC has failed to protect your interest: we've forgotten that the public airwaves belong to the American people.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: We've forgotten that the public interest is paramount, not the special interest of media companies. We've forgotten that the ownership of broadcast

media is fundamentally about our democracy: it's about the music that we listen to on the radio, it's about the news, information, entertainment that we watch on television, that our families are exposed to. And these days we hear a lot about the importance of spreading freedom and democracy around the world, but what about improving the quality of freedom and democracy right here in the United States...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: ... right here in New York? New York is the center for so much: the center for business, for finance, for fashion, for medicine, literature, art, entertainment, media, and culture. And as the media capital of the world, the nation's largest media market at the same time, it's the home of one of the most diverse population of the United States and, really, anywhere in the world! There's perhaps no other city that has shaped our national identity in language and culture more than New York. For example it was uh... only 30 years ago that this ci... city created the music and culture of hip-hop!

AUDIENCE: [*cheering and applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: We need to hear about that tonight! Now, hip-hop is not just the... artistic and musical expression of... of urban America: it's a cultural expression of generations of Americans in the East, West, South, Midwest... all parts of America now are benefiting from that [*unintelligible*] started right here in New York. And that's the kind of localism that we want to encourage. If local artists don't get heard on local radio, if that kind of music doesn't get its start somewhere and get a niche, how can it spread around the country and then around the world? And, on top of... New York's national significance in that sense, it really does come back to localism, what's happening here and how that spreads around the world. The significance of the residents of New York City and the surrounding areas deserve quality local music, quality local news, and quality public affairs information. Local musicians and artists deserve to have their music played on radio stations during times, of course, when people are actually awake to hear them, not just from 5 to 6 in the morning.

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Members of minority groups should be owners, not just consumers of broadcast media outlets in the city. And minority communities deserve to be portrayed on the evening news in a positive, non-stereotypical manner.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Now we hear from the media giants and some that argue that broadcasting like be... television and radio is no longer important because the p... competing distribution platforms - like the Internet, and cable, and mp3 players, and all the competition they are facing. But, despite of all those new outlets, study after study have shown that broadcasting is still the dominant source of not just local news and

information, but also of entertainment programming so much... much of which comes here out of New York. In the 2004 to 5 [sic] season, for example, it was broadcast television that had the top... 255 highest rated programs on TV and all but a handful of the top 500 were on broadcast TV. And in radio, the two satellite companies's people talk about competition, and I know that Sirius is based here in New York and I am proud to say that I am a subscriber myself, but I am one of only eleven million! And... there's over 200 million people that listen to radio on a... on a weekly basis, so there is a huge voice that they hold, and that's where we need to make sure that there's a diversity on that voice because they have such a powerful impact over our... culture, over political events, over the ideas that inform our public discourse. The broadcast industry still produces, disseminates and, ultimately, controls news information and entre... entertainment programs that inform the discourse and the debate in this country, and that is so essential to decisions that we make in the democracy. But when you look at today's media landscape we see hyper-commercialism, we see rampant homogenization, we see unforgivable lack of women and minority ownership, employment, and participation. We heard some of the statistics earlier but they bear repeating, that women make up over half of the population but yet less than 5% of the TV station ownership, racial and ethnic minorities make up 30% of the country - a third of the country - but yet they own less than 3.3% of all TV stations: African-Americans own 1.3%, Latinos 1.1%. There's something wrong with this picture. The media don't reflect the diversity that is the strength of this country, and as fewer and fewer media companies gain more and more control over the means of distributing these ideas, fewer small businesses and fewer and fewer women, African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, and all other minorities can use the public airwaves to contribute to our national experience in a ways that reflects their contributions to America. That's simply not acceptable in a country like this. And when it comes to local newscasts, we often see that they are dominated by sensationalism, by crime stories, little useful information, and even less government and elections information that people can use to make decisions! [unintelligible] today of course we heard that uh... NBC is slashing its budget by 750 million dollars including major cuts in its news operations. Several TV at local and national level are cutting news staff, cutting reporters, fewer writers, fewer producers have to... those that are left have to do more with less. And so, you see, news quality is suffering. If it bleeds, it leads is what we see: that might be good for ratings and the bottom line, but it's not good for our democracy. It's not good when it comes to covering the positive aspects of what's happening in our communities, when in depth coverage of local and national elections disappears, when real investigative journalism is replaced with video and news releases, when local news becomes a series of crime stories punctuated by traffic and weather. Now, for example, one study found that community public affairs programming accounted for less than one half of 1% of all local TV programming, compared to 14.4% for paid programming like infomercials for ab crunchers, so we may be getting tight abs, but I'm afraid we are getting a flabby democracy.

AUDIENCE: [laughter and applause]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: This... [laughing] This kind of cookie cutter approach to news programming has resulted in a loss of localism, a loss of diversity and a really

unfortunate amount of homogenization. As we heard at our hearing on the other side of the country, in LA, from the Writers Guild President, homogenization is good for milk but is bad for ideas. Radio is a clear example: today a lot of stations seem to play the same four songs over and over again. It's almost as if the national formats have taken over and the local... angle doesn't get heard anymore! In some stations there's no DJ left anymore: it's all voice track. Automation allows owners to record shows weeks in advance and give the illusion it's local program. Well, today we heard some great news uh... from New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer that he was... reached the first uh... deal with a radio broadcaster: CBS Radio agreed to a settlement in the payola investigation that he's involved in.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Kudos to Eliot Spitzer! [*unintelligible*] his investigation in the radio and record industry that has uncovered so many stations, a lot of them here in New York, that have engaged in practices that are more and more part of the corporate and business model than any time in history. I'd like to say that Spitzer's investigation has uncovered not just a smoking gun but an arsenal of smoking guns. When a station makes programming decisions on the basis of payola, it may make a short term gain but in the long run the consumer loses out cause listeners don't get to hear the freshest music, local artists can't make a go at it and get their creative genius on the radio. The [*unintelligible*] vitality of radio is sat by pa... payola. So it's not only against the law, it's really against the long-term health of the radio industry as well as listeners all across the country. Well, at least we are doing something about it here in New York. You should be proud of your Attorney General. I just wanted to let you know that I... unfortunately tonight have a competing commitment that requires me to slip out of here in a little bit, but I'm gonna listen to as much as I can and then I've got a very capable staff of Rudy Brioché who is gonna remain here and hear each and every one of you and report back. Uh... he happens to be one of the leading attorneys in minority ownership law in the United States and he has a fantastic background: he used to serve as the counsel of the NAACP and also to U.S. Senator Lautenberg from neighboring uh... New Jersey. But, best of all, he hails from Brooklyn...

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: ... so he knows these issues. [*laughing*] My friends, it's really all of you, the American people, who own the public airwaves. Media ownership is about the power to control your airwaves, the airwaves that you permitted the FCC to license to broadcasters in exchange for their obligation to serve the public interest. Well, I think we got to get a little more out of that equation for all of you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: And tonight we want to hear your ideas about how that ought to be done. We want to hear about whether or not we've done our job here in New York, whether broadcasters are doing their job here in New York, whether your local

newspapers, radio, and television stations reflect the diversity of the people and what's happening here in this great city, the greatest city in the world. Thank you so much for having us and I look forward to hearing from you!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Commissioner, thank you very much. Now we have another giant that is protecting the interest of the consumer, of minorities as a whole, and that is, of course, Commissioner Copps. Co...mmissioner?

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MICHAEL COPPS: Thank you. Thank you, Alex. Good evening, my friends. Uh... A lot of people worked to put this together. I won't take the time to repeat everybody's names. Well, I want to thank everybody who was a part of this meeting, thank all of our panelists, thank each and every one of you for coming out tonight. This is to me the most important meeting taking place in New York City today. Now, this is an important city, I know that there are lots of important meetings going on here every day, so why do I say that? I say it because of what is at stake here. Our media is at stake and our media, when you stop and think about it, is so all encompassing and so precious. It's how, outside of our strictly personal spheres, we speak to each other as fellow citizens. It's how we inform each other, learn from each other, entertain each other, who we govern ourselves, and, really, how we come to know ourselves as individuals and as members of a larger society. Media is a most powerful industry, the most powerful business in America [*unintelligible*]. I don't think anybody finishes a close second in influence. And how that power is used has a lot to do with your life and mine, a lot to do with our country's life, each day, every day. And if we are smart about it, our media will reflect and will nourish the genius, and the creativity, and the diversity of our country and all of our diverse communities. And if we are not so smart about it, the wrong media environment will hold us back, and dumb us down, and deflect us from democracy's many pathways. That's what brings us here tonight. The City is such an important crossroads of media, and finance, and arts. New York City is about incredible multitudes, multitudes of races, and religions, and traditions, and perspectives, and stories. Could there be any better t... place in the world to engage in a public dialogue talking about media consolidation and the future of our media? I don't believe so. Not only is the place perfect, but the timing of this meeting is perfect too, and that's because the FCC is in the midst of a hugely important proceeding right now to decide what the future of our media, our TV, our radio, our newspapers, our cable, even our Internet are going to look like for a long, long time to come. A little history just to set the stage for our discussion: three years ago, under then FCC Chairman Michael Powell and over the objections of my good friend Commissioner Adelstein and myself, the FCC... FCC severely cut back - really, eviscerated is a better word - the rules that were meant to check big media seemingly endless appetite for more consolidation. It passed new rules, which have allowed a single media giant to own in a single market up to three television stations, eight radio stations, the cable system, the cable channels, even the Internet hurdle, and the local newspaper, which in most cities of

the United States of America is already a monopoly. And the agency did all of that behind closed doors and without seeking meaningful input from the American people.

AUDIENCE: [*booing and shushing*]

MICHAEL COPPS: Can you imagine that? Authorizing a [*unintelligible*] change on how news and entertainment are produced and presented over the people's airwaves without even involving the people who own those airwaves and who depend so heavily upon them. It was a near disaster for America. Thankfully citizens rose up across the land: they sent nearly THREE MILLION PROTESTS to the Federal Communications Commission.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MICHAEL COPPS: Congress rose up too, and then a Federal Court sent those rules back to the FCC saying they were badly flawed and that they needed to be reworked. That was good and anybody that doesn't believe that citizen action can have an effect should just revisit what happened there. We checked those rules... you checked those rules from going into effect: it was concerned citizens at work and it was a con... citizens-consumers victory! But - here's the reality check now - we're right back at square one... and it's all up for grabs again. And if we are going to have a better result this time around doing something positive for media democracy, it's going to be because of more citizen action and more input from folks like you. So this time we need to make it an open public process instead of hiding in our office in Washington like the majority did in 2003. This time let all the Commissioners come to New York City: I wish they were all here tonight! And that all the Commissioners get out across America and find out what's happening in the real world beyond that beltway that they bemoan so much but seem to love staying behind so much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MICHAEL COPPS: So as we begin our discussion and begin with that simple reminder: it's all of us who own the airwaves. There's not A broadcaster, A business, A special interest, and any industry that owns one airwave in the United States of America. They belong to you and they belong to me and, my friends, now is the time to assert our ownership rights!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MICHAEL COPPS: Too many stations are absentee owned and operated from afar under business plans that do not do justice to the public interest. And serving the public interest means the interest of every segment of our society. How can it be good when we see fewer and fewer opportunities for Latinos, African Americans, and other minorities in our media? You've heard the statistics a number of times tonight: I'm not gonna go through them again. It was thirty years ago that the FCC put out a report saying it was apparent there was a dearth of minority ownership in the broadcast industry. And thirty years later there still is and it's not getting any better, and it's more shameful now than

it was thirty years ago. Ownership matters. More than that, I think ownership rules! So should we really be surprised, given the sta... sad state of minority media ownership, that the coverage and characterization of minorities in our media are so distorted? Should we REALLY be surprised that issues of importance to our many diverse communities don't get the attention they deserve? Should we really be surprised that creative artists and entrepreneurs from local diversity groups can't get airtime, can't get a business deal, can't find a job, and can't find an opportunity to be part of America's media culture? Journalism experts that have studied this problem have found that only a handful of stories feature Latinos and, when they do, it's most often a story about crime, terrorism, or immigration. Local TV news is four times more likely to show a mug shot during a crime story if the suspect is African American. And we hear that, in a city with as rich and diverse music scene [*unintelligible*] New York, popular local artists struggle to get airtime because big station owners are tied up in pay-for-play payola schemes.

AUDIENCE: [*unintelligible*]

MICHAEL COPPS: You know, this... this isn't rocket science. This is about doing something and doing something now. And until we do something targeted specifically to correct the shameful shortfall of minority media ownership, our communications sectors will continue to underserve millions of Americans who are the core of our country's wonderful diversity. You know, New York's strength, and America's strength, is its diversity. Some people talk about: "Oh, this diversity is really a problem to be overcome." Diversity is America's strength. Diversity is what gives us a leg up in this 21st century. And our media have an obligation to reflect that diversity, and they have an obligation to nourish that diversity, and it's a job nowhere near getting done!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MICHAEL COPPS: Now let me... let me just conclude by saying that this issue of media consolidation has been my most important priority since I went to the Commission five years ago. We got a lot of big issues on the table there, but I understand that other people, some of you in this audience, have other issues' priorities. And goodness knows there are huge issues out there that... we need to be concerned about: issues of peace and war, of finding and keeping a job, getting healthcare for our families, educating our kids... The list goes on, and on, and on. And these issues may trump everything else, but here's what I tell people: even if the future of our media is not your number one issue, you better think about making it your second issue, and that's because Americans get their input and develop their views about all of those other issues that I just mentioned through the funnel and through the filter of big media! Now if you are OK with that, fine. But if you think that, just maybe, these other issues would fare a little better in a more open, and a diverse, and a competitive environment than they fare in a closed world of evermore media concentration, then you need to make this your issue and you need to act on it! We have a steep hill to climb, to get through this proceeding, to check new rules, and then to move forward in building media democracy in this country. But what I have seen around this country - and Jonathan and I have been to meetings in every corner of the land - gives me hope because people understand this issue. You know, Michael Powell

sat there at the FCC and he thought: "Oh, people don't really care about the overlap of radio signals, well..." - [noise] excuse me - "they don't care about how many outlets one broadcasters can own." Let me tell you: they understand when a little agency in Washington, in secret, decides to change the way the people's airwaves are used. Not only do they understand it: they are downright proprietary about it and they can get awfully damn mad about it. And that's what happened last time and I see that happening again this time. This is not a partisan issue! This is not Republican versus Democrat. It is not liberal versus conservative. It is not red state versus blue state. It is a grassroots, all-American issue that affects EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US. And if we all get involved, I will be happy to take my chances with the good sense of the American people. And if you and I get this right, at the end of this debate, finally, we will be able to enjoy airwaves of, by, and for the American people. That's called media democracy: I think it's worth fighting for. Let's fight and LET'S WIN!

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ALEX NOGALES: ¿Qué les parece? For those of you who have not spoken to Commissioner Adelstein you will know that he is also Spanish speaking. ¡[unintelligible] que bien! Uh... Two things: first of all Marta Garcia has informed me that there are over 350 people in attendance: congratulations to all of you for being here!

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ALEX NOGALES: And number two: those of you that know Angelo Falcon van a saber que tan ocurrente que es. He just informed me that we are six minutes behind schedule.

AUDIENCE: [laughter]

ALEX NOGALES: Let me introduce our panel and, again, you will remember that they will have five minutes apiece to speak. I will stay up here to make sure that more or less we are in the same time. First of all, we have Mary Ellen...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 3a: Betty Ellen...

ALEX NOGALES: Betty Ellen, espérame... Berlamino - what a beautiful name you have. She is Vice President and General Manager of the CW11 here in New York. Uh... Next to her we have Arlene Davila, PhD, Professor of Anthropology and American Studies from New York University: welcome. And then, next to her we have Juan Gonzalez, columnist, New York Daily News, very well known person here in our community. And then we have Coach Willie May who's the sports anchor and morning [unintelligible] host at 97.7 Wild [unintelligible] in Boston. Welcome to all of you, and we will start with Betty Ellen. And remember, folks, that some folks are not going to have the same ideas and the same philosophy that we will have, but it doesn't matter: uh... they are here and we will listen to them patiently and with all uh... candor and also with all courtesy and respect. So, Betty, you are on!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

BETTY ELLEN BERLAMINO: [*unintelligible*] Thank you. Thank you. I'm Betty Ellen Berlamino. I am the Vice President and the General Manager of WPIX, the CW11 here in New York. Uh... we are a Tribune broadcasting station. Since I am the sole representative of free, over the air broadcast television here tonight, I hope the fact that I have spent my entire career in broadcasting will lend some expertise and credibility to my remarks. I started my career at an entry-level position as a Sales Assistant and have held four previous positions prior to my appointment as General Manager in 2000. Believe it or not, that makes me the longest ranking individual in my position here in New York. I'm under the impression that the topic of this hearing is to discuss media consolidation and its effect on programming, employment, and ownership of broadcast properties as those areas specifically pertain to people of color. My role tonight is to enter that discussion as it pertains to broadcasting. The New York DMA contains 23 over-the-air television stations, which are owned and operated by 18 different owners. Four of those stations are Spanish language stations. There are 73 radio stations in this market with 43 different owners, and there are over 40 daily newspapers serving New Yorkers in about 6 different languages. There are also 3 free daily papers: AM New York and Metro, which are published in English, and Hoy which is in Spanish. 89% of New Yorkers subscribe to cable, and the combined cable and satellite penetration is approximately 94%. My cable service, Cablevision, offers packages that range from 32 stations up to 251. I wa... and let's not forget the Internet: according to Pew Internet & American Life project, 73% of Americans use the Internet today. Therefore it's not surprising that you picked New York, the New York market, to discuss diversity: it is the most diverse market in the country. What is surprising, rather alarming however, is the FCC's potential attack on free, over-the-air broadcasting. A change in the current cross ownership rule could further accelerate the demise of free broadcasting. Crippling the free press will only accelerate the power of Pay Television. Today, 23 television stations deliver 49% of the viewership. Twenty years ago 9 television stations delivered 100% share of the viewership. It gets tougher and tougher to compete with Pay Television. Cable operators enjoy a double revenue stream and, therefore, it shouldn't be surprising that Monday night football, 25 New York Mets games, and 29 New York Yankees games have all recently moved over to Pay Television. Just a couple of years ago they were all available to the public for free, and yesterday it was announced that both the American League and National League Divisional Series, as well as one major league championship series, will migrate over to Pay Television. That means that potentially 6% of New Yorkers will not be able to see their hometown teams in post-season play. That 6%, however, is not evenly distributed throughout the market. For instance only 65% of Brooklyn is wired for cable and yet 90% of Nassau County subscribes to cable. Burroughs such as Brooklyn, Staten Island, the Bronx and Queens, which fall below the market average, could potentially be cheated out of Mets, and possibly Yankees [*laughing*] playoffs next year. Yes, I'm predicting that the Mets will definitely get there again next year.

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

BETTY ELLEN BERLAMINO: Uh... under current FCC rules, Cablevision, which owns 54%... control 50% of the cable market, and Time Warner, which controls 27% of the market, can own multiple programming channels, enjoy two sources of revenue - subscription and advertising dollars - and yet there are no regulat... [sic] regulatory barriers barring a pay cable service from owning a local newspaper. Let me illustrate. Time Warner owns cable systems here in Manhattan as well as CNN, CNN Headline News, the local news channel New York 1, HBO, TBS, TNT, Cinemax, and publishes Time, Fortune, People, and many other periodicals. And, they are free to buy the New York Times, the New York Post, the Daily News or Newsday, without any FCC review. Yet a free, over-the-air broadcaster like Tribune could potentially be barred from cross ownership in the future. That's rather interesting when you consider the fact that WPIX was born from the company's newspaper, the Daily News, in 1948. In fact our call letters actually represent the paper slogan at the time, New York's Picture Newspaper. The Tribune sold the paper in 1991 and purchased Times Mirror in 2000. At the time, Times Mirror owned Newsday and Hoy. Since this co-ownership of assets, Tribune has transformed the Spanish language paper, Hoy, into a FREE daily paper which reaches 60,000 Spanish speaking New Yorkers on a daily basis, and we have expanded its distribution to two other major Hispanic markets: Los Angeles and Chicago. And most recently, in 2003, we launched the first free daily newspaper in New York, AM New York, which provides over 350,000 New Yorkers with free access to news. In other words Tribune backed [unintelligible] up [unintelligible] free paper in the most competitive market in the country to compete against free... excuse me, to compete against PAID papers including one of our own. Without the backing of all the company's New York assets, this might not have been possible. Yet, because of this cross-media collaboration, we are able to distribute the paper free of charge at subway stations, bus stops, and apartment buildings. This intercompany collaboration has yielded tremendous benefits for our consumers. A standalone operation, like WPIX, would not have been able to report live from Iraq as the war was breaking out. However, Newsday reporters equipped with videophones brought all the action, and emotion, directly to our viewers. I can give you countless other examples of news collaboration, but let me share one that we are most proud of. In 2004, we broadcast a series of reports in tandem with the Newsday investigation on assisted living facilities on Long Island. One of the key findings was that 127 elderly residents had wandered away from several facilities and, unfortunately, 7 of them died. We learned that since assisted living was a fairly new industry, it was not being regulated on a federal or state level. As a direct result of this Newsday-WPIX investigation, Governor Pataki introduced legislation to regulate these types of facilities. This was the culmination of eight months of investigation on Newsday's part, once again something that WPIX would not be equipped to do on our own. Additionally, we've also worked with them [unintelligible] public affairs programs that examine issues such as childhood obesity, the importance of volunteerism, and the need for more political engagement on the part of our youth, just to name a few...

ALEX NOGALES: Betty, you're at six minutes. I'll give you one more...

BETTY ELLEN BERLAMINO: Uh... By definition we are a broadcaster, meaning we have to appeal to the masses, which in our case means over 21 million people in 3

different states and every conceivable ethnicity, and I think we do a pretty good job. The fact that there are big media companies behind most of the broadcasters allow us to report live from Iraq, s... stream breaking news on our websites, schedule debates for political candidates, cover local sporting events and community events, televise par... parades, celebrate diversity with programs and spots highl... highlighting celebrations such as Hispanic Heritage Month and Black History Month, schedule PSAs that draw attention to the needs of local charities, and initiate station events that support food, toy, and coat drives and raise money for communities in need. At WPIX we have raised over 7.6 million dollars for the Care for Kids Foundation and given them to local charities in this community. And the Tribune New York Foundation, in tandem with Newsday, has raised over 3.5 million dollars and given them out as well. Uh... It's this commitment to public service and, therefore, it's not surprising that Tribune was recognized in Hispanic [unintelligible] in being one of the top 50 companies for Hispanics in both 2005 and 2006. And I'm proud to say that at WPIX we embrace the sentiment we reflected on our air where 50% of our fulltime on air talent is comprised of persons of color and well over 30% of our overall staff is made up of mi... minorities. We have an employment outreach program that routinely disseminates our job openings to 91 different organizations, including 21 that specialize in minority recruitment. Our program schedule reflects the diverse programming. We have a live interpreter translating our late newscast into Spanish every night and, in partnership with the Spanish language radio station WADO, for a simulcast of our Mets game. So, in conclusion, I hope I've been able to showcase some of the many benefits that the newspaper-broadcast combination can promote. I share these examples with you as a free, over-the-air broadcaster that recognizes the threats to our business. One of them, however, is not the lack of diversity in broadcast television. Instead we should be working together to save our airwaves fr... from monopolies like Nielsen... and the rising costs of subscription services. Let me also remind you that in 2003 the Federal Third Circuit Court wrote - and I quote: "The Commission's decision not to retain a ban on newspaper-broadcast cross ownership is justified and is supported by record evidence." The court went on to write that newspaper-broadcast combinations can promote localism and that a blanket prohibition on newspaper-broadcast combinations is not necessary to protect diversity. As a person with 26 years of experience in this industry, I cannot agree more. Thank you.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you, Betty.

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ALEX NOGALES: Please excuse my bad manners: I introduced the first panel but there's two others eager beaver panelists for the second panel. Anthony Riddle is on my far, far left and then I don't happen to know the gentleman... next to him but I have to assume that that is M1, is that correct?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 4: Marianne Pryor.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much for the correction and I can't see you very well without my glasses... In any case we go on to the second panelist and, like you, I am very

interested to know what a Professor of Anthropology is going to say to us. So, with that, let's go with Arlene Davila.

ARLENE DAVILA: Hi, I'm Arlene Davila. I'm a Professor of Anthropology and I'm here with some of my students of Latino Popular Culture. Uh...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ARLENE DAVILA: Media conglomeration affects everyone: it diminishes diversity, limits the views and voices that are heard, and leaves us with prepackaged programs that are disconnected from local communities. Yet, when Latinos are concerned, the situation is still more dire. The statistics are perhaps the greatest testament to this: my students were pretty amazed and outraged to learn that while Latinos make up for more than 14% of the national population, they own at best only 1% of the TV stations. It is a scandalous fact that Latinos have become relegated to be mere consumers, not producers or owners of media outlets in this country. There's a so-called Latino boom but we are not profiting from this market. We remain practically shut out from ownership and from the top decision making positions in the industry from the ones that do pay the box and money. Since the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, there has been even more consolidation within Spanish language Latino media industry, especially in radio. The result has been a decrease in local news and local affairs programming, and an increase in nationally syndicated entertainment. What this means is that today the myth of the so-called boom in Hispanic marketing, Latinos remain second class audiences more than ever [*sic*]. The regular channels don't address them in their full diversity and neither do the so-called Hispanic media. It was troubling that in 2003 the FCC approved a merger of Univision and Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation. [*unintelligible*] regulation has in fact exacerbated the monopoly of Univision over the Hispanic market, making it almost impossible for other voices to get access to this market. What is most amazing to me, however, is how the dominant monopoly of Univision, which is so recognized by everyone, by activists, by scholars, by students, by the average Joe on the street, remains so unchallenged! The argument that led to the merger of Univision and Hispanic Broadcasting was that Spanish language market is simply a n... a niche, like a jazz music radio station would be, of the general market and, hence, that it should not be under public scrutiny and control. What is important for the Commissioners to understand is that the La... the Spanish language market is in fact its own sector and must be treated politically and economically as such. It is... It is its own market because the Latino media are not... are not used primarily by non-Spanish speakers. In fact they are used by a particular sep... sector, the Spanish dominant Latino with particular needs uh... and interests. At the same time, Latinos are a very diverse population that varies along the lines of nationality, regional origin, citizenship status, language use, and race, yet they are treated by Univision as one market via primarily imported programming from Latin America. The heroes and heroines of many shows are [*unintelligible*] primarily white, often times [*unintelligible*] even though Latinos are primarily also people of color, Black, or of indigenous background. Hardly an entre... any entertainment programming is produced with the U.S. [*unintelligible*], with U.S. ta... U.S. born ta... Latino talent, writers, and producers with Hispanic sensibilities uh... of... of this country. For instance,

my English dominant uh... Latino students in my Latino Popular Culture who aspire to o... to be actresses or writers will have a very hard time finding jobs in this white and Europeans centered world of Univision!

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ARLENE DAVILA: I think it is important to have Spanish language media, but the Latino market should not be equated with only this one segment. The Latino market is not homogeneous: it is far from it! However it is increasingly homogenized thru the power that Univision and other conglomerates have been allowed to *[unintelligible]* throughout the years, especially after the merger of Univision with Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation. The wave of consolidation in the Spanish language Latino market threatens to undermine the potential... the competition in this sector, but also the role that it can play to modernize and to inform the public, especially a public that still suffers from great economic, educational, and social inequities. For my discussion with Hispanic marketers, creative talents, and musicians, I know that people feel very frustrated with Univision's power. In fact many uh... media entrepreneurs are very upset for not... playing in a fair playing field. That's why we don't see their ideas becoming part of the programming. That is why we lack U.S. Latino focused children's programming or programming for our bilingual Latino youth. That's why we don't have public affairs programming in most Spanish language media. These types of offerings are typically excluded because they are not considered profitable by the owners of this media, and such diverse programming is being phased out of the airwaves or not developed all together. But believe me when I tell you that there are hundreds of media creatives who would like to produce and star in this type of diverse show, and there are thousands of audience members who would be delighted to see more diversity, as... especially their own racial heritage too, represented on Spanish language television...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ARLENE DAVILA: Univision has made the argument that it is unfair to single them out. The content of mainstream media companies should also be questioned and this is also true. However, Univision is in a very special position: they are the primary communications means between mainstream society and a primarily immigrant U.S. minority group that is hungry for inclusion, and information, and self-expression. Latinos are not being served by a media giant that stifles competition and diversity. Latinos come in all colors and shapes, not only those defined by Univision. This is why it is important that the FCC listen to this community as we challenge media policies that allow such increased concentration to take place and refuse to allow the FCC or any other governing entity to use Spanish language Latino media as simply one niche that can be exploited for profit without any consideration to the social needs of this community. The airwaves belong to all of us and should be used to serve this community in all of its depth, breadth, and di... diversity. Uh... The airwaves should... should be uh... should serve Latinos, not simply profit from them. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ALEX NOGALES: Dr. Arlene Davila, Anthropologist, had a lot to say to us. Now we go to our journalist and broadcaster uh... who will put us back on time - no pressure Juan - Juan Gonzalez.

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

JUAN GONZALEZ: Uh... Good evening. Uh... My name is Juan Gonzalez. I'm a staff columnist at the New York Daily News, a Past President of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and a professional reporter, for nearly thirty years, in our nation's commercial media. I thank Commissioner Copps and Commissioner Adelstein for their continued willingness to hear the concerns of the public as the FCC prepares, yet again, to overhaul the nation's broadcast ownership rules, a process that has the potential to make a bad situation far worse than anyone can imagine. I'm talking about the impact of media consolidation on news and information provided for and about the nation's fast growing population of racial and ethnic minorities. Just this week the United States reached a milestone: the 300 million population mark.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JUAN GONZALEZ: More than a third of that population - more than 100 million people - trace their origin not to Europe, but to Africa, Asia, Latin America, or to the original indigenous people of the hemisphere. By 2050 that figure will surpass more than 50% of the total U.S. population.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JUAN GONZALEZ: Yet our news media, especially our broadcast media, have failed in stunning fashion to reflect in their ownership, their employment, and their news coverage this rapidly changing reality. Worse: if present trends of media concentration continue and if our government loosens even further its regulation of broadcast ownership... rules, media ownership by racial minorities in my opinion will virtually disappear in the United States. We are in real danger of waking up one day with a de facto apartheid system, one where a small group of giant firms, run almost exclusively by white investors and managers, control the production and distribution of news and information to a largely non-White population.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JUAN GONZALEZ: Is this overly alarmist? Not if you consider some of the facts we've heard this evening. Uh... the two thou... The last report the Department of Commerce did uh... tracking media ownership was in 2000! It stopped doing the reports! And... uh... at that time it found that 3.8% of all full-power broadcast stations in the country were owned by people of color. Now, when an independent non-profit group does the job that the Federal government should have been doing, uh... we find that the actual ownership by minorities has decreased since 2000 so while the popula... minority population of the

country is INCREASING, the minority ownership of radio and television is DECREASING! Uh... The... So this... this is a... is a... is a troubling trend that we've been uh... we've been trying to get data on. The FCC has not been mining its own data, the Commerce Department has stopped doing the studies. While the race or ethnic background of an owner is hardly a sure guarantee of more balanced news coverage, the FCC's own studies several years ago in response to the Adarand case found a clear connection between minority ownership and more diversity in content and staffing. For eleven years now, the NAHJ has produced its annual network brownout report, as our Executive Director mentioned uh... earlier. Each report examines coverage of Latinos and evening news of the major networks. Every year it h... shows the same depressing result! Stories about Latinos have made up less than 1% of the more than 12,000 network news stories that air annually, even while Latino c... population continues to explode. This is going on year, after year, after year! When Latinos ARE covered, the two dominant themes are invariably undocumented immigration and crime. The harm done to our community and to the general society by this persistent marginalization of Hispanics and by the preponderance of stereotypical coverage cannot be overestimated. As a veteran journalist...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JUAN GONZALEZ: As a v... veteran journalist I know that ownership matters! There are few ex... news executives uh... uh... in our time brave enough to butt the viewpoints of their owners on a day-to-day basis. It is not a manner of how many different channels, how many niche publications, on how many platforms or particular uh... venues you... produce your content: if it's the same owners, the... the viewpoint diversity, no matter how many different niche publications [*unintelligible*] how many outlets you have, will not be substantially different.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JUAN GONZALEZ: So, if there is no diversity in ownership, it is extremely unlikely the public will receive sufficient diversity in viewpoint and coverage. Because of media ownership concentration, our democratic discourse has been cheapened, distorted. We call on the FCC to use its regulatory powers to reverse this dangerous trend, to... reassert the long established principles of our national broadcast policy of diversity, localism, and competition. If we do not reassert them, then we are headed for a de facto apartheid media system. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you, Juan.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

ALEX NOGALES: Very good. Now we go to **Coach Willie May**: he is a sports anchor and morning [*unintelligible*] host. I should tell you all that we have... their resumes in one of

the playbills that we have out there so, if you are more curious uh... than the very short introduction that I'm giving to the panelists, please look at that and you will find their resume. Coach?

COACH WILLIE MAY: Well, thank you. Uh... you won't find my resume or a story about me in your program, but I think what has happened today with this situation... They thought that our situation in Boston that has happened was so important that I was invited here to New York to tell you about something very paralyzing in Boston. And uh... that's why I'm here tonight: to tell you about it. August 20th - yeah, just a little less than two months ago - my life changed. Not just mine, but my colleagues' at the radio station that I worked at for 22 years! About five years ago, our station, WILD, was bought by Radio One who owns, yeah, multistations all over the country. But you know what? They didn't care about the little station in Boston, so what they did was they paralyzed us, they took away our voice. We don't have a minority station anymore! We don't have a community station anymore! You see how it is on this [*unintelligible*] right now? This is what it's like in Boston right now: quiet. We don't want that to happen here. We don't want that to happen ANYWHERE else! We got to be heard and... we cannot allow consolidation to put an end to our voice! And that's what has happened to us. And it was done in such a cowardly way. Had a chance to talk to the Commissioners earlier and I told them: it was worse than the Radio Shack situation, uh... when they let go all the people, about a month ago, let them know by e-mail! Let me tell you: I get a call August 20th. I'm home with my son. We are about to go out to go to the wrestling match. He's excited, I am too, and I listen to a voice mail message saying: Hi, Coach, this is blady bla from Radio One. I called to tell you that the station has been sold: you come in tomorrow, do your shift, and we'll let you know if you've been retained or if you've been severed. The next day ALL OF US were let go, just like that. It's that easy, it's that simple for someone to just pull away your career that you've worked so hard for and worked so diligently for, and we don't want none of us out here or any of us up here to go through that paralyzing situation. So what I'm here to do is to let you know to talk to our Commissioners, to let them know that we got to stop the consolidation: it's ripping us apart, it's tearing us apart, and believe me - I'm here to tell you first hand - I've never in my 25 year career NOT had a job. It's a different space for me, it's a different space for a lot of my coworkers. This is what I love doing, this is the passion that I still have, and I want to have that situation back again. But, with consolidation, it's not going to happen. Also, with the local marketing agreements, a lot of slacking in those rules. Our people at the FCC have got to tighten up that situation because, let me tell you, LMAs are a [*unintelligible*], and we found out the hard way. Also, just as the Commissioner said and some uh... other panelists have said, consolidation is killing radio. And guess what? If we don't do something about it now, this is going to affect television also. We have got to go out there and handle our business. We cannot be silenced. The media is too big. We are too big! Yes, the airwaves of ours... are ours: we gotta show them that they are ours and we are going to fight to the end on this situation in Boston. Just to tell you real quickly before I wrap it up: the station that took over in... our... frequency in Boston... We got flipped like a piece of real estate: we were bought for 5 million dollars, sold for 30 million. They didn't even want our frequency! All they wanted was our antenna. The station already simulcasts on another frequency so... what do they need ours for? We've been

silenced, but now they are on two frequencies: don't let this continue to happen! We need your support! Thank you!

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ALEX NOGALES: All right. This first panel is excused from the podium. If I can have the second panel get more in the mi... in the middle and, while that is happening, I'm going to ask a number of you to come up to the microphones that are on either one... side uh... to get in tha...ose lines over there. We will start with some elected officials: they are Congressman Anthony Weiner, Councilmember Melissa Viverito...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 5: All right!

ALEX NOGALES: ... and New York State Senator Efrain Gonzalez. So if I can have them come up to the podium first... Panelists, thank you very much, I appreciate it. I have another list and if you will start coming up to the podium... And the people that are going to be doing the timing: if you will get next to the microphones so that in fact we can do this very quickly. And you will all have three minutes to speak: please be very aware of time. We want to uh... be sure that we hear from everyone and we uh... won't be able to if in fact we [unintelligible] too long so let me read some names [clearing his voice] and then we will go from there: Bianca Diaz, Lisa Davis, Marleen Falù, Adam Moore, Angelo Alicea, Wesley Dicks, Tim Carr, John Brinkley, Augustina Perez, Omar Sully, Ronnie Wheeler, Vanesa Ramos, Suleica Cabrera, Rafael Ortiz, Americo Cassiano, Luis Cancel, Miguel Bonilla, Dan Coughlin, Irene (it says here Representative but that can't b... quite be right), Charlie Dominguez, Francisco Estarellas, Gina Falù, Luis Garden Acosta, Nancy Giles, Kathy James, Carl Kathan-Lipscone, Tomas Lopez, Edwin Marshall, Edwin Pagan, Domingo Ramos, Florence Rice, Mariela Rosario, Artie Jajani, Ivan Shields, Javier Soriano, Mario Tapia, Antoine Wallace, Kay Yu. I don't see a lot of people lining up at the uh... microphones. Is that happening? All right. I see State Senator over here, is that correct?

EFRAIN GONZALEZ: Correct.

ALEX NOGALES: State Senator, welcome. You are first.

EFRAIN GONZALEZ: Thank you. Uh... Good evening, uh... Commissioner... Adelstein and Commissioner Copps, and all of you: I think that uh... I have uh... I support this kind of... forum and... and this kind of uh... uh... public uh... hearings that you do and conduct around the country. I know that uh... I agree with what uh... Professor Davila and Juan Gonzalez had stated. Uh... part of the thing is that, as a New York State Senator and as uh... President of the National Hispanic Policy Institute, that merger of Univision, Clear Channel, and HBC cause they were in the middle of that uh... vis... and uh... to that you two voted against that for the record and... uh... uh... I'm... I'm glad because one of the things is that the FCC applies the rules that they wanted to or made up rules that they wanted to ma... make up as they went along. My interest was the public's interest and my interest [unintelligible] the Policy Institute and we went to court, to the Second Circuit,

because, although we're all in terms of fighting the consolidation with the corporate interest, that our interest was the public's interest and although the judges at... that got appointed or [*unintelligible*] ruled against us, uh... one of the things I've found was that the 1996 uh... Communications Act it was more in tune to the corporate interest and not to the public interest. Uh... in that uh... particular uh... situation I... I have some testimony that I will be submitting for the record in order to move the... program but, uh... as we move along, we need the other Commissioners to join you guys in terms of making this the FCC so that the public's interest will be defended at all cost. So that means two things: that means that uh... that goes legislatively to the next act whatever they are going to do because I always felt that you two Commissioners always act as you always speaking to the television. Uh... you've acted always in the interest of the public and you speak to the television like we speak to technology that is coming forth uh... on... on the airwaves. But the main thing is that we all have to be together because when... as we move along in terms of fighting diversity uh... and opportunity, whatever the corporation is, we are not there: we don't own it, we don't manage it, and we hardly even work there! So, in that sense, all they want is our dollars, our earned dollars, because this is all about advertising and our dollars [*unintelligible*]. And we have to be more united and more in terms of the public's interest so that, when the big corporations start laying out money there and start throwing money out there, the public cannot sellout. That's the part in the fight that we have in the days ahead as we go to a new Communication Act that would allow uh... like the Commissioners that we have there and the ones that we need to be appointed, to fi...to make America what it ought to be. Thank you very much, Sir.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Do I have Congress...man Anthony Weiner in the auditorium? I do not. Do I have Councilmember Melissa Viverito? She is on her way. Please let me know when she is here. Uh... I will need the two people that are keeping track of time right next to the microphones, otherwise we'll never get done. So, are you that... that person? Who is the person on this other side? OK: get right next to the person who is speaking so that they can see your note. Remember: you are limited to three minutes. We are going to hold tight to that otherwise we won't hear from everyone that is in line. All right. Now we are going to go to this corner first. Give your name and your testimony: you have three minutes.

LEX LYRIC: Thank you. M... My name is Lex Lyric, I broadcasted on WKCR FM 89.9 from 1998 and I'm the Founder and uh... Chief Director of **Urban Diomni Media Incorporated**...

ALEX NOGALES: Get closer to the mike.

LEX LYRIC: I'm the Founder and Director of **Urban Diomni Media Incorporated**. I'm hip-hop so I'll just pick it up.

AUDIENCE: *[laughter]*

LEX LYRIC: Uh... I wanted to... ask you first and foremost: what will the FCC do to directly promote minority ownership of broadcast media? Uh... I'd like actually...

ALEX NOGALES: You know, this is your testimony, rather than a question and answer period...

LEX LYRIC: *[unintelligible]* All right. I... I... *[unintelligible]*

ALEX NOGALES: ... so give us your testimony.

LEX LYRIC: My testimony?

ALEX NOGALES: Yes.

LEX LYRIC: My testimony is that I have had the opportunity to see both sides of the divide, with regards to individuals who own and/or minorities hear, from when I was working as an intern for Granite Broadcasting Corporation under W. Tom Cornwell, and I've seen other individuals who have worked for more public entities, which have also helped and provided some use to the community, but not owned. And I would really, really appreciate if someone on the FCC would go to bat for ownership and engage in activities that would promote ownership on a very grassroots level. It's about education. It's very much also about having access. My brother went to *[unintelligible]*. He actually was in the same class as Lachlan Murdoch, k... who's Rupert Murdoch's son. Rupert Murdoch's son goes out into the world and you know *[unintelligible]* drops out. He's still going to be running a multimedia million media... multi dollar... multimillion-dollar media - billion actually - corporation: it's because of access. What I... I want to know what the FCC will do to promote access in each market. I think there are about 220 *[unintelligible]* in the whole United States.

ALEX NOGALES: Wrap it up, please.

LEX LYRIC: And... what... we can do that uh... I would sincerely appreciate it and be, you know, a lot more thankful for the point that we have individuals actually going to bat for corporations that are coming up because, if they don't have anyone to go to bat for them, they are simply going to phase out and die.

ALEX NOGALES: Very good. Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ALEX NOGALES: Now, folks, we've got to stay to the three minutes so I will need the people that are timing to make sure that you get them at the three minutes, that you cut

them off at that particular point. Two minutes, excuse me: I said three, it's two. All right, we are on this side over here: your name?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 6: [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: I'm sorry?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 7: [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: One more time: I can't hear you.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 8: [*unintelligible*] three minutes.

AUDIENCE: [*murmuring*]

ALEX NOGALES: Did I say three? Then we'll stick to three. Here we go.

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

LISA DAVIS: Ah...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LISA DAVIS: Good evening, everyone. My name is Lisa Davis. I'm with the Tri State Say [*sic*] Like It Is Support coalition. Like it is is the longest running black produced show in U.S. history...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LISA DAVIS: ... and is also the best public affairs, bar none! And uh... I'm also on the local station [*unintelligible*] WBAI. I'm here to present my testimony in terms of what the FCC has done, not to mention the horrific way in which WABC Television treats and disrespects the Black community and I got the letters in my hands to prove it. But...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LISA DAVIS: ... for over a year - I want everyone to know - for over a year... and I'm also from New Jersey so you have these hearings here and they are nice, but you need to come across the river. I'm here to ask you to do that as well: we have been trying for over A YEAR! We have been sending letters to the FCC, uh... the... the Chair, Kevin uh... Kevin Martin, I've even sent letters to you, uh... Commissioner Copps, and heard nothing! We sent over 1,500 letters: I have 9 of them here that I'm going to be presenting in the term of the complaints against ABC, but we have been complaining and talking about that the FCC needs to come over here! We've been asking you to come to New Jersey for OVER A YEAR! And we can't get anybody to even acknowledge us. One person did, after I had to call several times Shoys... uh... uh... Roy Sherlock, who is the Chair of the uh... the uh...

Localism Task Force hearings. And nothing! She didn't... I mean, it was patronizing when I said: "I would like to have hearings over in Newark and New York" and she responded with information I didn't even ask for, what I already knew. That is not acceptable! We are going to continue this fight. What has been going on is horrific! We are not going to stop. I'm.... tonight on the record requesting that you come in to New Jersey, that you come to Newark, and that you never, ever AGAIN ignore the requests that have been sent to you! I have these letters, and I also have again the letters with our complaints and all of that, and uh... I also want to just give acknowledgement to the other people I've worked with: **Betty Dobson** of [*unintelligible*] who has done an excellent job in terms of fighting for our interest. We want you to come to Newark as well.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LISA DAVIS: So I have [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: [*unintelligible*]

LISA DAVIS: [*unintelligible*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 9: [*unintelligible*]

LISA DAVIS: [*unintelligible*] WABC [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: Folks, I will need all of you to help...

New York City Town Hall Meeting
October 19, 2006
Hunter College Kaye Playhouse
(Transcript)
(Part 2)

ALEX NOGALES: As you can see we have a panel that is already here. So I'm going to ask the first five in line to stay in line. The other ones that are behind the first five, sit down: you will be the first ones in the second uh... round of testimony. All right? So the first five count yourselves off: come on, one, two, three, four, five. The rest of you sit down. One, two, three, four, five on this side. Sit down: you will be the first ones on the... on the testimony when we get started with the testimony. Uh... I have a panel as you can see. Now you are going to have to help me here by staying on time. You've got three minutes and I'm going to have to cut you off if I have to, OK? Vamos por acá, por favor.

MIGUEL BONILLA: ...lo. Uh... OK. My name is Miguel Bonilla. I'm with the Hispanic AIDS Forum. It's the largest uh... HIV-AIDS health promotion organization in New York City. I... In the last four years a staff member was brutalized in front of his home in the Bronx while being called fag and maricón. Over 30,000 Latino men, women, and youth are living with HIE... HIV, and the number continues to climb dramatically. An estimated 100 million dollars will be cut in programs for HIV, programs that prevent homelessness and give medicine for people to live. Yet, somehow Plushenko, the Russian blue cat lost in Madison Square Garden, gets more visibility than the lives of New York C... City's largest ethnic population. How can this be? Three years ago, HAF along with 50 other community organizations were invited to a WABC community forum where we would discuss ways to diversify the news. We sat around in tables with friendly producers and reporters who seemed genuinely interested in covering our stories. Yet, after more than 200 press releases, media advisories, and public service announcements, not one story has been picked up by WABC. Unfortunately, from our experience this is the norm. As the nation regulator for radio and television broadcast, the FCC has the power to change such disproportionate media coverage. You can find broadcasters whose staff is not representative of the community they serve. You can require broadcasters to report a percentage of their stories on issues related to communities of color. You can set up a panel between the ethnic media and mainstream broadcasters to learn... more about issues that matter to us. Or you can appoint an o... ombudsman to represent the interests of the public by investigating and addressing complaints...

ALEX NOGALES: Wrap it up, please.

MIGUEL BONILLA: ... reported by individual citizens.

ALEX NOGALES: Wrap it up.

MIGUEL BONILLA: OK... Uh... Or... perhaps we could... oh... That's it. Thank you.
[*laughing*]

AUDIENCE: [*applause and laughter*]

ALEX NOGALES: [*unintelligible*]

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Muy bien. Vamos al otro lado, por favor... Señora, ¿su nombre?

FLORENCE EMMA RICE: Uh... [*clearing her voice*] My name is Florence Emma Rice, uh... a consumer advocate. Uh... I have a show, Flo... Florence... 30 minutes on Florence Rice. What concerns me is the fact that the only time you see people of color on telev... on television is when they've committed a crime. I was so deeply concerned of that I've created a [*unintelligible*] day for Black man and Latin man. The fact is that that is all you see! The s... What... The message is being sent to our young people, our children, that the only time that we are c... that people of color are criminals. What you are doing to our young ch... children is taking all hopes and dreams away from them. It's time that the FCC begins to understand they are supposed to represent the PEOPLE. They're supposed to do that, which they don't... which they haven't done. I'm deeply concerned. One of the... questions I would like to know them about... Community access [*unintelligible*]... public technology, public broadcasting uh... uh... why is the community is [*sic*] not at the table when these decisions are made? And they are not!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

FLORENCE EMMA RICE: What is the community [*unintelligible*] because uh... uh... on these discussions. So it bothers me, it bo... The fact is that we are concerned what... the televisions and companies, the large companies, are doing to our children. The only thing that I see that is being done is our p... children of color is being uh... uh... dummed down to... to realize that there's no hope for them, so I'm deeply concerned. FCC, it is time.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

FLORENCE EMMA RICE: And Mr. Copps, I... I have tried to reach you. It's important that the m... the m... the... media realize that the free... that the air... is free and they are not to be able to control it like they do. That's it. [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you now.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

ALEX NOGALES: Folks, I started off with five people over here, I started off with five over there, and I have more than five. I have four... So the first four from this side over here? The rest of you please sit down and you WILL be the first ones when we re...

reconvene. On this side first. And the people that are keeping track with time: I need for you to wave that piece of paper. I can't see your times from here but I CAN see you wave. So let us go, please.

SARON LIU: My name is **Saron Liu** from New Tang Dynasty TV, uh... independent Chinese l... language network, and my testimony is called: Battl... Chinese battling for the freedom of information. I want to know uh... I want to... to ask everyone: do you know that after 9/11 there is a lot of Chinese, even many Chinese in N... New York, they cheer about this tragedy? That is exactly because of the long-term brainwashing from the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda. And the Chinese Communist Party's... seeks to dominate Chinese language media all... all around the world, and over the past twenty years they have been very successful in implementing this strategy in the United States. For example, I want you to pay attention to a Chinese language network called the CCTV, which is the China Central Television. That is the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party so the CCTV, over the past twenty year... years, has been expanding dramatically in the United States. Now uh... they have been broadcasting from thousands of satellites, including many U.S. based satellites. They also uh... they have uh... programs in Chinese, English, Spanish, and French. They covers... Their program cover the entire globe, and... and now CCTV programs are aired in all the U.S. nationwide satellite networks and almost ald [*sic*] major cable channels in the United States. Thru CCTV's broadcasting in U.S., Chinese Communist Party's propaganda is targeting EVERY single Chinese family in the United States. CCTV has been e... extensively utilizing [*unintelligible*] with the U.S. based satellite cable networks to block uh... the airing of independent Chinese language media such as New Tang Dynasty TV (NTDTV). And also I want to say: this is not a matter of free flow of information, it is a matter of national security.

ALEX NOGALES: Please wrap it up.

SARON LIU: Uh... CCTV is trying to uh... control the Chinese American to remain... The Chinese Communist Party is trying to control the Chinese American to remain loyalty [*sic*] and to act as a mouthpiece defenders and [*unintelligible*] of the Chinese Communist Party. I want... Last I want to call the Commissioner to... We should raise uh... We should... we should have a legislation to require that every single U.S. satellite cable and other transmission operators who carries CCTV programs or other Chinese Communist Party controlled programs should carry independent Chinese language programs such as NTDTV programs as well. Thank you very much.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much.

SARON LIU: I have a package I want to pass to Commissioner...

ALEX NOGALES: I'm going to this side and that line hasn't gotten any shorter, guys. I got three people over here. I need three people over there. Please, go ahead!

BLANCA DIAZ: Good evening, Honorable Commissioners, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen. My name is **Blanca Diaz** and I am a member of WBAI's Coalition for the Retention and Expansion of Latino Programming. The Latino Coalition would like to take this opportunity to take the... to thank the organizers of the event for providing [*unintelligible*] a forum where the voices of underrepresented communities can be heard. This coalition has been formed in order to safeguard and expand Latino programming at WBAI. Its members consist of WBAI listeners, union leaders, community activists, elected officials, cultural and arts institutions, as well as WBAI non-commercial radio producers. The Latino coalition's initiatives are: expand Latino programming to reflect the 27% Latino population in the tristate area, retain current Latino programming at WBAI, implement policies that promote the hiring of Latino staff, allot resources to promote, train, support Latino staff and recruitments, support the broader issues of underrepresent... underrepresented populations in media. The Latino Coalition will make itself available to discuss our issues in greater detail than the two minutes allotted here. Uh... community has a long-standing dispute about the programming at WBAI dating back to the early eighties when there was zero hours dedicated to the Latino community. As of January 2006 there was an attempt at WBAI to eliminate popular Latino programs while, at the same time, setting up a divisive situation among Latinos at the station. The producers of these programs have joined forces and in order to send the message to WBAI and Pacifica Management that Latinos at WBAI refuse to be pitted against each other by management to compete for a couple of hours a week allotted for Latino programs. Over the past twenty years, representatives from community have made efforts to meet and negotiate with WBAI management in order to arrive at a resolution that will be beneficial to the station, to the Latino community, and WBAI listeners at large. Our coalition would like to make recommendations to the... to the Honorable Commissioners of the FCC: we recommend that the non-commercial public airwaves be protected from commercial buyouts and in effect be protected under the statutes of public trust...

ALEX NOGALES: Thirty seconds.

BLANCA DIAZ: ... that public access cable television not be parceled out to private inst... interest but that it indeed remain a media accessible to the general public, that all commercial and public radio and television reflect the growing demographics of Latino within the United States, as well as the diversity of all other ethnic groups, in its hiring practices, news coverage, and in programming. The WBAI L... Coalition for the Retention and Expansion of Latino Programming endeavors to make a difference on the local... level. We wholeheartedly support the efforts of the organizations represented here today as struggles of one of the same. We sincerely hope we will be able to continue this dialogue and, thru the exchange of higher principles and ideals, we'll arrive at a place that will promote a greater understanding amount... among our citizenry. Again...

ALEX NOGALES: Muchas gracias.

BLANCA DIAZ: Thank you.

ALEX NOGALES: Muchas gracias. Let us do the following, folks: all of you who have written testimony, I want you to turn it in to the young people that are right there in front of you giving you uh... uh... times. Please hand it in. And for those of you that have gone before, that have written testimony, please pass it over. Now, we... we go much faster when you don't read. Remember, you are not professional readers and it's hard sometimes to... to understand you. So if you can tell us verbally what you've written down, that would be great! If you feel that you mu... absolutely must - I see this young woman over here...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 10: [*unintelligible*] Councilwoman [*unintelligible*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 11: [*unintelligible*] Councilwoman [*unintelligible*] arrived [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: If she is here, yes, we will uh... we will tend to her first. Please!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MELISSA MARK VIVERITO: Thank you. And... and I want to commend the organizers of this uh... forum, which I think is critical and I am... My name is Melissa Mark Viverito, I'm a New York City Councilmember, and I am here representing the Black, Latino, and Asian caucus of the city Council: 26 out of the 51 members of the d... New York City Council are people of color. We are Black, Latino, and Asian, and I am very proud to represent them here today.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MELISSA MARK VIVERITO: Uh... Basically our concerns with regards to this forum and the reason we decided to [*unintelligible*] take a stand is the... access to representation through the media is not just a civil right, it's a human right. And when we talk about inalienable rights, communication rights are based on a new, more powerful understanding of the implications of human rights and the role of media. The key principles of communication rights are freedom, inclusiveness, diversity, and participation. Diversity of ownership in the media and forms of access to the media that ensure that the views of ALL sectors and groups in society are heard is c... obviously critical here. Uh... it's critical to democracy and to political participation. Big media leaves little room for diversity. Big corporations push out other outlets that may offer competing points of view, meaning less diversity of voices and a narrower range of debate. According to Out of the Picture, a study on minority and female TV station ownership in the U.S., minority owners thrive in more competitive markets, and minority production of local news is more likely to occur in a competitive market. Big media does not serve local communities of color. Stations that are owned by people of color only serve a small percentage of African American, Latino, and Asian American households. Eight out of ten Latino homes are not served by a Latino owned station. Nine out of ten African American homes are not served by an African American owned station. Nine out of ten Asian American homes are not served by an Asian American owned station. Thus...

percentage of businesses owned by people of color has increased over the past several years in nearly every sector of the economy except broadcast television. There has been no improvement in the level of minority broadcast television ownership since 1998 even as the total universe of stations has increased by approximately 12%. Clearly big media ignores diversity. The needs of people of color and the working class are ignored because these people are not advertisers. [*unintelligible*] report shows that most media organizations are not owned by people of color and are therefore not INVESTED in the needs of those communities. New York City contains a significant number of African American and Latino TV households, yet there are no African American or Latino owned TV stations. And, obviously, the importance of [*unintelligible*] ownership of media is critical in all this. So...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MELISSA MARK VIVERITO: ... we are here to express our serious concerns as legislators and we really feel that this is a... an issue that has to be a... addressed. I think that there are clear examples nationally. I think uh... Clear Channel is an example of how uh... views... uh... diverging views have been stifled and uh...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MELISSA MARK VIVERITO: ... we really need to be uh... uh... mindful of all this. So, I thank you for your time.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

ALEX NOGALES: Come in, please.

OMOWALE ADEWALE: Yes, my name is... My name is Omowale Adewale from organization uh... Grassroots Artist MovEment (GAME) and I would like to talk a little bit from the artist perspective uh... in terms of also... as advocate of uh... hip-hop. I went to Nigeria last December and what I uh... basically uh... realized, and I kind of knew before I even went there, is that they had this idea of uh... black males in... in the U.S. So when I went to Nigeria, they s... you know, they wanted to see me blinged out, you know, having all the bling-bling, you know, talking about, you know, having guns and so on and so forth. Where do they get this information from? Uh... VIACOM controlled companies: MTV, VH1, that's what they have uh...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 12: BET!

OMOWALE ADEWALE: BET, exactly! It's not really a Black entertainment television tha... Black if you don't own it basically! [*laughing*]

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

OMOWALE ADEWALE: So... But the reality is - and... and... it was kind of... it was really ironic that, when I went there, I'm coming from the South Bronx - people [*unintelligible*] Congressional District there is the poorest in the entire nation - so I'm coming into, you know, the Nigeria uh... and uh... Lagos and it looks pretty much the same way South Bronx looks, you know. So they are looking for me a... a... anticipating somebody might come all blinged out so... But I had to basically explain to them, you know, basically the idea that people had about Nigerians, you know, was just as backwards! [*laughing*] You know... So...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

OMOWALE ADEWALE: And that's basically media! That's the issue and that's the fault of media. What happens is we are a lot of artists and people who see... they see the artists on television, and they hear the artists on radio, and all of a sudden they feel that, well... you know, these artists, you know, may have backwards ideas. Look how this artist is talking... misogynistic artists... there's artist [*unintelligible*] bling, you know, extravagant thing, and so on and so forth. But reality is as soon they sign that contract, the [*unintelligible*] and the [*unintelligible*] telling them what to put out there, what to put on radio, this is the owners telling them what to put out, but who hears the flat? The artists hears the flat so it's basically: "Do I put food on the table or do I basically... you know, I got to come to terms". And that basically puts the artist in the situation where they can't afford to eat if they don't talk about...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 13: [*unintelligible*]

OMOWALE ADEWALE: ... going against their community, talking about the real issues, what's going on in the South Bronx. You know, the community actually created hip-hop. Instead of talking about bling, you go in and there is no bling bling: it's just reality, a lot of hustling, you know, and the legal sense of it that I am just trying to survive, trying to get by. So what we need to do - and I'm ho... I mean, I heard you, gentleman uh... other gentleman as well from the FCC, and it ta... it sounds real good, but what's happening?

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

OMOWALE ADEWALE: If you guys, you know, are saying these great things I hear and making us have a thunderous applause, then what's happening at the FCC? There's nothing really [*unintelligible*] I didn't hear answers as exactly why. If you guys are so pro what we are talking about, in terms of ab... in terms of uh... uh... uh... having regulations and... and stopping consolidation, then... what's happening?? What's the holdup?

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much.

OMOWALE ADEWALE: So I want to end with that, I don't want to take too much time. Thank you.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much. Please go to the other side. Give us your name, please...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ZENAIDA MENDEZ: Good evening. Thank you, Commissioner and distinguished members of the panel. I am Zenaida Mendez, the Director of External Affairs for the Manhattan Neighborhood Network public access television. Policy must be instituted that encourage ownership of media outlets by people of color and, more generally, to give marginalized communities across the country broader access to the airwaves and the media. Local access and control ensure that communities have a voice in determining what their future communications systems look like. Local access means giving community the ability to create their own media and the power to r... decide how to meet their own technology and communication needs. Those needs include everything than public television channel to universal bro... broadband [*unintelligible*] services. Today local assets is more important than ever. We are entering in an era of three in one: telephone, television, and Internet service all will come thru the same pipeline. Let's talk about the lack of diversity in New York City and media representation in the commercial Spanish speaking radio and television programs. There is a lack of diversity voices from within the United States. Even Univision and Telemundo shows: a significant number comes from a handful of Latin America countries. And the radio station are very few. In addition, there are few with programs that are vulgar and disrespectful. Afro-Latinas and Latinos, and Latinos indigenous the same are almost invisible in the commercial airwaves, issue that negatively a... affects community of color and New York City and not adequately addressed. Considering the ethnicity [*unintelligible*] make up our community [*unintelligible*] how community of color historically are being portrayed in the media and the structure that continue to result in misrepresentation, it is vital to have a strong media sector controlled and operated by people of color. With that comes a broader structural change. This means that media need really to [*unintelligible*] that all the community in New York City are... definitely included.

ALEX NOGALES: You have one minute.

ZENAIDA MENDEZ: New York City unique... is unique. There are over 120 languages spoken and pe... and people from all over the world. Each New York City neighborhood has its own flavor and vibrant culture. New York City is for the... fortunate to have public education and governmental assets community media to fill the void. As of today, Manhattan Neighborhood Network public access television station provides individual community-based organizations with training and television equipment that they need to make television production particular to those traditionally disenfranchised communities that are systematically shut out by the c... corporate mainstream media such as the low-income immigrant, LGBT, and community of color. These programs are then aired in Manhattan's four public access TV channels on the town [*unintelligible*] cable and RCN

system reaching sixty... 650,000 households throughout the borough. What I want to let you know is that Latina, and just like **Marleen Falù** mentioned, we, Afro-Latinos, are completely out of the picture and we need to be included! Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

ALEX NOGALES: Very well. We go to the other side.

TOMAS LOPEZ-PUMAREJO: Yes, my name is Tomas Lopez-Pumarejo. I uh... I teach International Business at the Department of [*unintelligible*]

ALEX NOGALES: Get closer to the mike, please.

TOMAS LOPEZ-PUMAREJO: Yes, my name is Tomas Lopez-Pumarejo. I teach International Business at... the Department of Economics of Brooklyn College, City University of New York. I just wanted to make two points, uh... the first point being that uh... management and ownership are not the same thing and sometimes management is more important than ownership. And, at the national level, management in general only uh... fift... around 15% of the Fortune 500 companies' managers are female. And uh... in all managerial positions in the country uh... only 6.4% of managers are African Americans and only 4.5% of managers are Hispanics, and I imagine that when it comes to media companies that numbers... that those figures are much less. The other point I wanted to make is that uh... conglomeration hurts uh... the United States and the other... uh... It's something that I would like to underscore because, that being said, uh... [*unintelligible*] three levels: the first uh... the first level it's because uh... the... the system of government of the United States is a web of local governments for which, uh... for it to function, it requires informed citizenry at the local level. It hurts the uh... the American economy because, needless to say, the... uh... monopolies and oligopolies work against the free market economy and... But we haven't considered one aspect that is very, very important about local media, and it's uh... security, safety. Uh... uh... Perhaps uh... other people here are aware that when Katrina happened uh... it... there was only one low power FM station in the vicinity of Louisiana that was able to keep people informed uh... of what was going on and hence uh... helps save lives but...

ALEX NOGALES: You are out of time. Wrap it up, please.

TOMAS LOPEZ-PUMAREJO: And so that's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you. What is your name, please?

LUIS CANCEL: My name is Luis Cancel, I'm from the Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center, the largest arts incubator in New York City, which is located in the lower East Side. And it is a pleasure for me to have this opportunity to address FCC Commissioners Copps and Adelstein, and [*unintelligible*] the other distinguished members of the panel.

As the Commission considers the question of whether or not to relax ownership rules, it should keep in mind the importance that the Founding Fathers gave to a free and [*unintelligible*] press, the press being the only media outlet of their age. They made sure that the First Amendment of the Constitution protected both freedom of speech AND a free press. James Buchanan, the 15th President of the United States observed - and I quote him: "I like the noise of democracy." Buchanan liked the cacophony of opinions, the multiplicity of views, the diversity that can only find expression through a rich and diverse environment of independently owned newspapers, radio, and TV stations. I am here today to urge you and your fellow Commissioners to desist in the effort to allow the cross ownership of media properties in the same community by a single corporate entity.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 14: [*unintelligible*]

LUIS CANCEL: The relaxation of this prohibition will NOT promote diversity of opinion. This relaxation will not encourage ethnic minorities to own their own T... radio and TV stations. The relaxation of cross ownership will only succeed in producing homogenization of views and information to the general public, the adoption... and spread of a single view as fewer news directors and fewer owners help to determine on a daily basis what is news, what is important to cover, and share their opinion with the public.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LUIS CANCEL: The concentration by media ownership by conglomerates will limit diversity and ownership by ethnic groups. Those groups that wish to start or purchase a small radio or TV station will find themselves competing with larger, better-financed media corporations that will inevitably prevail by raising the price of ownership.

ALEX NOGALES: Wrap it up, please.

LUIS CANCEL: The concentration of ownership by press, radio, and TV outlets [*unintelligible*] makes local stations less responsive to local issues and needs. Now, I run a local Latino cultural organization, we have 30 uh... we have... 30 seconds left! Uh... we have four theaters there and we cannot get uh... proper coverage in the... in the local... in our local media here. And we are in the largest Latino... almost the largest Latino media market in the country, so imagine what would be the consequences of that with constinued [*sic*] consolidation. So, with that, I will say that famous last quote I was going to give you...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LUIS CANCEL: ... and thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much. Folks, I have one more person this side, I know I have only one more person on that other side, so the rest of you will be first when we come back. Please... Your name, first.

IRENE MARTES: My name is Irene Martes...

ALEX NOGALES: Arrímate un poquito más al micrófono, por favor... Somebody help her, please? There we go.

IRENE MARTES: OK.

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you. Arrímate.

IRENE MARTES: Uh... My name is Irene Martes and I'm a member of the Student Leadership Team at Vangar High School. Today I am speaking on behalf of the Reach Hip Hop, representing educational access... activism and community through hip-hop. I believe that people in the media should always be socially responsible for everything that they say. They have younger kids listening to them thinking that the... what they are saying is right. I understand that there is freedom of speech, but can't they reason what they say? I really don't like to wake up in the morning to hear curses and stereotypes about people. This also affects my four year old sister who loves the radio. She sits at home... she sits at home thinking that it's OK to say what people on the radio say. She was thought to listen to her elders, but it's kind of hard to teach a four year old that the N word and the B word are not wo... are not OK... when she hears people on the radio saying it.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

IRENE MARTES: People in the media should be professionals. Wouldn't they rather... wouldn't they rather have people look up to them as role models, than people look down at them because they say bad things to make people feel bad? I don't wanna to... my little sister to grow up thinking that it's OK to speak like that. The radio is h... the radio is heard by the public so they should respect the opinion of their listeners. The FCC should take that to... ugh! The FC she... The FCC should take actions to improve the diversity of media ownership to represent what real listeners want to hear. We want to hear local New York City artists, not only those who can afford to engage in [*unintelligible*] p... payola participants. We want dive... we want diversity and choice in the media outlets. Young people are shaped by the media and we [*unintelligible*] viewing choices. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you very much.

VANESA RAMOS: Good evening,

ALEX NOGALES: Give us your name first, please.

VANESA RAMOS: Yes. Good evening, my name is Vanesa Ramos, I am the Director of Policy at the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families founded in 1982 with the mission of improving the quality of life of Latino children and families in New York City in childcare, family health, and news development. We are here to state our deep concern regarding the course media broadcasting has taken and raise our voice against further media consolidation. FCC has been failing in its duty to protect the public interest and democracy in the media, and abandoned the obligation of ensuring diversity and fairness in media ownership and broadcasting. By enacting regulations favoring media conglomerates, you are having a chilling effect on speech and discussion. If this trend continues, the effects upon children, particularly children of color, are going to be detrimental. To give you an example, as of July 2005 New York City's population was over 8 million and Latinos comprised 27.9%. The poverty rate in the city is WAY above the national level and approximately 22% of New Yorkers are living under the poverty line: 29.1% of Latinos live under the poverty line, and 32.5% of New York City's children live under poverty. These children in these families need dreams and role models that are culturally sensitive to their reality and are looking for media programming with a positive influence in their development and future. The media CAN be an agent of social justice by promoting early learning, fostering diversity and respect for races, presenting positive role models...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

VANESA RAMOS: ... and stimulating creativity. Therefore, this is the time to take affirmative steps in promoting equal opportunity corresponding to the cultural richness of the many communities in this country.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 15: *[murmuring]*

VANESA RAMOS: We should join hands in removing the barriers of privilege and reconstruct a new media that will stand for local broadcasting and advance the welfare of all of our children. We urge you not to follow the path of giving power to the ones that already have too much power. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: *[cheering and applause]*

ALEX NOGALES: Thank you. All right, folks. *[clearing his voice]* We have to continue with our panel and to do the moderation on this particular panel we have my very good friend, Angelo Falcon. Remember that the rest of you will be the first ones up when we come back for testimony. Angelo Falcon? Come on out!

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 16: *[unintelligible]*

ALEX NOGALES: Don't be shy.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

ALEX NOGALES: Say hello to him.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 17: *[unintelligible]*

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 18: *[unintelligible]*

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 19: *[unintelligible]*

ANGELO FALCON: Uh... Again, thank you all very much for your patience. We are trying to get a lot in here and we obviously came up with a very uh... uh... unrealistic schedule on the way we scheduled it, so we really appreciate your patience in getting all this. As all... As Alex has mentioned to all of you, this uh... uh... will be turned into a transcript that will be submitted to the FCC as an official uh... uh... testimony, so, uh... you know, it's a process we are... we are going to go through.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 20: *[unintelligible]*

ANGELO FALCON: The panel, the next panel uh... consists of some very exciting speakers, uh... very uh... honored to... to be a part of this. Uh... in so I'll just uh... introduce them as they speak. And again: uh... five minutes is not too much time so uh... we'll be very b... uh... I'll have to be very brutal in terms of cutting you off and stuff unfortunately. So let me start with Anthony Riddle uh... Anthony, if you could introduce yourself and...

ANTHONY RIDDLE: Thank you, Angelo. I'd like to thank uh... the National Latino Media Coalition...

AUDIENCE: *[unintelligible]*

ANTHONY RIDDLE: *[unintelligible]* Uh... I want to thank the National Latino Media Council and all of its members for bringing us here, Free Press... I'd like to thank uh... the Commissioners and staff for being here and, most especially, I'd like to thank all of you who have the commitment to come out this late at night and to stay through the uh... proceedings.

AUDIENCE: *[applause and cheering]*

ANTHONY RIDDLE: Uh... I repre... I work for the Alliance for Community Media, which represents the interests of thousand of public educational government access channels around the country. Uh... those access centers in turn produce more then 20,000 hours of new programming per week using 1.2 million volunteers per year and serving over a quarter of a million community organizations per year uh... on the channels. A lot of you

probably know uh... what we do by now. Uh... I'm appealing to you as an African American, as a current resident uh... of the lower East Side, and as a resident of Harlem uh... to understand why this is an important issue, this media ownership is an important issue. A lot of you may know about the holiday Juneteenth: Juneteenth is a celebration of June 19th when the slaves in Galveston, Texas, were told of the emancipation proclamation approximately two and a half years after it was signed...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 21: [*unintelligible*]

ANTHONY RIDDLE: Yeah, that's the... that's the next hearing!

AUDIENCE: [*laughter*]

ANTHONY RIDDLE: Uh... But the point is that there were... For two and a half years people were born slaves that should have been free. For two and a half years people died slaves that should have had a few moments of freedom. And for two and a half years people worked for a system, which choose not to give them the information they needed to be free people. And I submit to you that that's the situation we are in today. The question...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANTHONY RIDDLE: ... the question is: will your children be slaves? And I... and I hope that you know what the answer needs to be to that. The Alliance for Community Media asks for the FCC to strengthen the rules, which encourage media ownership by people of color and women. The entire PEG community that I talked about above functions on less than 1% of all the cable revenues, and the cable revenues are uh... are very small compared to the entire entertainment industry, and yet we provide the only unmediated coverage of communities of color, coverage of positive cultural activities in our communities, which do not get commercial media attention. Uh... We provide the right and ability to cr... uh... create community in our own image, and we provide technical training and jobs. PEG operations employ more people of color and women in management and technical positions than all the commercial industry combined. Community controls only one form of ownership [*unintelligible*] private sector ownership is tremendously important in a free market society. The relationship between ownership and content on one hand, and advertising for minority and woman owned businesses on the other is profound. Women and minority owner... owned uh... businesses media aggregate different audiences and provide different opportunities for our businesses to advertise. As these advertisements allow our businesses to expand, the businesses in turn are more able to support the development and production of content for their own communities. Media ownership by women and people of color is good business for everyone. Several years ago, the Manhattan Neighborhood Network right here in town did a uh... statis... statistically valid survey, which showed some amazing things, one of which is what... For instance, Manhattan Neighborhood Network had over 90 uh... Spanish language or Spanish culture series programs in a single year...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANTHONY RIDDLE: ... and... and those programs represent uh... Puerto Rican, they represent Colombian, they represent Panamanian, they represent Dominican, they represent Mexican, they represent Spanish, they represent the whole diaspora. And yet, when you look at the size of that community in New York City and realize that it should have a market force that would... that would cause the ownership of uh... Hispanic, or African American, or Caribbean, or African channel in... in this city and it doesn't, then you realize that the market forces are not enough to... to make sure that ownership is diverse and that we need rules that will protect that.

ANGELO FALCON: You only have one more minute.

ANTHONY RIDDLE: Uh... just like to point out that uh... although we try to serve the needs of the uh... female and minority community, we are very undes... underresourced for that. The FCC is currently being asked by big corporate media to create new rules, which will decrease diversity even before it finishes its own study on the health of women and minority media ownership. Our communities do not need someone to speak for us however well-intentioned: we will speak for ourselves. The...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANTHONY RIDDLE: The business of media is not first a business: it is first the voice of a people wanting to take responsibility for the direction of their own lives. And considering media ownership, women and minority ownership, or cable franchising rules, we ask that the FCC please keep in mind the cautionary tale of Juneteenth. There is more at stake here than a few dollars or a few shows. It is a question of whom we value as a people. Thank you for your time.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Uh... Our next panelist is uh... Mr. African Bambaataa? He's uh...

AUDIENCE: [*cheering*]

ANGELO FALCON: ... the father of hip-hop culture.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

ANGELO FALCON: [*unintelligible*] hip-hop to the world and uh... by the way, he also uh... just finished taping a VH1 uh... hip-hop lifetime achievement awards uh... special...

AFRICAN BAMBAATAA: I'd like to say peace and blessing and power and blessings to everybody. Brothers and sisters, so called Black, Brown, Yellow, Red, White people: I want to speak to everybody as human beings. There's something funky going on in America, and we got to really uh... wake up and see what is going on. Yes, the FCC got a

lot of problems and got a lot of issues, but this has been going on for a long time. Payola in the radio stations, uh... mind control, Program Directors... You got to understand what is a Program Director. Now, we are saying that there needs to be a balance on our airwaves, we... and as soon as we say a balance of [unintelligible]. We've got to understand: if we play 50 Cent we want to hear Common Sense...

AUDIENCE: [applause]

AFRICAN BAMBAATAA: If you play in the... If you in... [unintelligible], have you [unintelligible]? Do you listen [unintelligible] Limp Bizkit and [unintelligible], we still want to hear the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and...

AUDIENCE: [applause]

AFRICAN BAMBAATAA: ... John Lennon and... and Lionel Richie. If you ain't funk, calypso or whatever... or salsa... You play the new school: we still want to hear the true school. We still want to hear [unintelligible], Celia Cruz. We still want to hear [unintelligible], James Brown, The Temptations... You see that they are trying to control your minds and the masses of the people. There is something that is going on with TV and media, why they want you to be using the N word, call a woman [unintelligible] names using the B word. You got to check out WHO is controlling the minds of the masses of the people! Nothing is going to be done until you change the mindset of the people! Now, if you love Allah, Jehovah, Yahweh Elohim, [unintelligible], and you are into the so called prophets of the bible, the glorious Koran, and you sit on your asses every day, you go to church, the mosques, the temples, and you just worried about the FCC, if you don't get up off your butts and start finding out who is these Program Directors at these stations...

AUDIENCE: [applause]

AFRICAN BAMBAATAA: ... who is these Board of Directors at these stations, and you get out there, either protest, make their jobs hell, put fire to their asses, hit all the sponsorships, make them be accountable to YOU the American people. You got to come back and bring power back to the people, and you got to stand like [unintelligible] says stand.

AUDIENCE: [applause and cheering]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 22: Yeah!

ANGELO FALCON: That was well said and under time!

AUDIENCE: [laughter]

ANGELO FALCON: Much appreciated! Uh... Our next uh... panelist is uh... Marianne Pryor who is representing the Writer's Guild of America East. Marianne? And by the way, she's a... she's a woman, not a man, so I wanted to correct that, just for the record!

MARIANNE PRYOR: I'm here today on behalf of the Writer's Guild of America East. It's a union that represents...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 23: [*unintelligible*]

MARIANNE PRYOR: It's a unio... it's a union that represents news writers as well as entertainment writers. The last 25 years I've been a news writer and editor at ABC News and network radio. I've seen firsthand the changes in the News Divisions since ABC was taken over, first by Capital Cities and later by Disney. These are changes that involve news quality, the commercialization of the news, the lack of diverse voices, and localism. I think everyone recognizes that the Walt Disney Company is a master of marketing: nobody knows how to dazzle better than the folks at Disney. What's troubling to many writers and producers at ABC News is how marketing has not just trickled down to ABC management: it's become a mantra. Managers push to get stories on the air that cross promote ABC entertainment shows, overshadowing or pushing out other stories. Recently the ABC TV Network came under fire for donkey drama about the 9/11 attacks. It was an entertainment show, but at the News Division word went out that every script mentioning the controversy need to be cleared by a company lawyer. At ABC Network Radio and its national affiliate news service, there were more stories produced this year on the national spelling bee than in any prior year: this was also the first year that ABC televised the National Spelling Bee. Here in New York City, WABC-TV ran stories in its prime time news broadcast on magician David... magician David Blaine nearly every night of his eight day underwater living stunt: his emergence from the water was televised on ABC in prime time. I would argue that such valuable news time could have been better allocated to local news of real value to the community.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

MARIANNE PRYOR: Managers also played to major markets and affiliates in the drive to gain an audience share. In August 2003 the insurgency was just getting under way in Iraq: conservative radio talk show host was saying the national media was overplaying this story. At ABC network radio a top manager stood in the middle of the newsroom and decreed that we should - quote - only report on the good news coming out of Iraq. There was stunned silence in the newsroom. We all knew he wanted to please affiliates who carry these talk shows. We also knew it's our job to tell the truth to the American people...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MARIANNE PRYOR: ... even if it's a terrible truth. Many people wondered why the very tragic murder of Laci Peterson in California got so much attention, while murdered or missing women in smaller states or smaller cities got little or no airtime. The same goes

for legislative changes in small states. The answer, in part, I think is that California has many large markets so ABC like other may... major news organizations jumped on every salacious detail of the Peterson case. In one instance a manager saw an e-mail based on ONE source that seemed to have new information: he wanted that information on the air immediately even though it hadn't been verified. The Senior Editor and Assignment Editor pointed out it was a single source, and we need at least two sources. As the manager insisted on rushing this on the air, the reporter involved threatened to quit. As the tense argument went on, ABC producers in California sent another e-mail saying the new the detail was dead wrong, don't use it. Only because the editors and the reporter had union protection and couldn't be fired on the spot were they able to stand up to a manager quite intent on violating a basic rule of journalism - get it right - in the hope of pleasing big affiliates. Now WABC-TV, in current contract talks with the Writer's Guild of America East, is insisting on removing show producers from the union. I believe that will reduce the quality of news. No longer will these producers be allowed to think independently: they will feel compelled to join the company marketing mania for fear of loosing their jobs. This marketing mania has caused a change in the way story ideas are generated. Instead of bubbling up from everyone, a story lineup is imposed from the top down for all platforms: TV, radio, the Internet, and the new digital channel. That means fewer diverse voices are heard. I remember several years ago, when the singer Selena was murdered, I... I hadn't heard of her, but as a Senior Editor I asked out loud in the newsroom if anyone knew who she was. A young desk assistant, a Latina from Texas, explained Selena was on the verge of big breakout stardom: she had an English language album coming out. We immediately got the story on the air. Now it's not clear that young de... desk assistant's voice would be heard because the story agenda is coming from managers who are predominantly white and male. Because of the marketing fixation, independent story ideas from assignment editors and news writers are discouraged rather than encouraged. Even expert analysts come from a preapproved list so there aren't as many diverse voices and opinions heard on the air. At ABC news, writers and producers have been working without a contract for 20 months. CBS news writers and producers are also in potac... protracted contract talks. We are struggling to remain objective journalists who understand the FCC public interest obligation. We affirm our commitment to joining in a public fight for quality news and diverse news. In return, we hope you will support us in our struggle to maintain union contracts that protect journalists at ABC and CBS.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MARIANNE PRYOR: Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Uh... [*unintelligible*] bring it all together, M1 one half of Dead Prez and hip-hop ac... artist and actor [*unintelligible*]

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

M1: Greetings. Uh... [*unintelligible*], which means freedom in Swahili. My name is M1 as it was stated. I am one half of the international, tell it like it is, all too political group Dead Prez.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

M1: Uh... I'm here uh... to represent for African people uh... I'm here to represent for hip-hop uh... I don't have a lot to say, but what I have to say is important. Uh... first of all I'd like to pay respect to uh... the father of this culture that I'm a part... I'm a part of: sitting right beside me, African Bambaataa...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: That's important.... That's important because I think there's a few things that we do know and what we do know is that uh... the media in this country is uh... is an organ of the state o... and uh... the ruling class state that controls what we hearing...

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

M1: ... and what we seeing. Uh... I'm clear on that so it helps me to understand our position. Uh... It helps me to understand that uh... that... that this propaganda is part of a war that also exists against the Black and Brown community. It's not just a war for oil: it's a war for the minds of our people and I've been a part of this. I... uh... I've... My group, uh... Dead Prez, have been existing in... in t... in this hip-hop industry for about twelve years now and I... I gotta... incredible education uh... to understand what it takes for the voice of the people to be heard because ultimately that's what we trying to do, is let the people's voice be heard. Uh... [*unintelligible*] where I'm just in from and Mexico City 25 million people: the... the voice of our people here i... is extinguished, we are voiceless. Uh... the image that is being reported to the people outside of America about what is going on here is false. It's just like my brother Omowale reported uh... from the Grassroots Artist MovEmEnt. And I'm here to balance the scales that on... and it's only free voices that will be able to balance the scales. Uh... serious uh... I'm a citizen of [*unintelligible*]. Uh...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: Uh... I'm here to say that we sick and tired of not having voices that reflect exactly our reality in our community.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: We sick and tired of that.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: Uh... And we also sick and tired of being BOMBARDED with senseless, and useless, and meaningless uh... messages that don't do anything but drive forward this capitalist machine and get us to spend more, more. That's not what we want to hear.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

M1: That's not what we want to hear. Uh... I work for the people. The street is my office. I put my ear to the ground and I hear our movement: that's not being reported on radio, it's not worth being seen on the TV. Uh... That's what I do, you know, as a social animal, and right now I'm here to say that the word for the day is self-determination. That's what we need: self-determination.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: That's what I... inside... inside this meeting, outside this meeting, over our lives, and it's being reflected in what's happening to our brains. Uh... What we are here to say on the 40th anniversary of the Black Panther Party, what we hear you repeating, community control just like my partner here said.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: Uh... And we are talking about complete community control. If we are not talking about the people being able to govern the voices that is coming into our community, our elders, our ancestors, uh... our leaders. Like we say in hip-hop, [*unintelligible*]. Other... othe... In other words, let the leaders lead and let that be the filter for what's being heard in our community, the real that need to be heard in our community. Uh... uh... And uh... you know, basically I will put it like that: shout out to the Grassroots Artist Movement, which is an organization that's uh... our union, that's unionizing the hip-hop....

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

M1: It's a fight for the ownership of our art and our culture. Uh... And either that or turn off the radio or turn off that bullshit. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

ANGELO FALCON: I'd like to thank all the panelists: it's very, very stimulating. Thank you. Uh... I need to start the uh... session, the next session here. Uh... we have a... about 40 people still signed up to speak. Uh... I need to start uh... with a coalition uh... partner uh... Is Nancy Giles in the room from Screen Actors Guild? Is she... Is she... there? ¿Se fué?

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 24: [*unintelligible*]

ANGELO FALCON: Bueno, se fué. Bue... Too bad. OK, ahora seguimos. Uh... The people who have been asked to sit down before, can you come to the... Let's start with you: come

to the uh... uh... mike, and, please uh... you know, we are on the honor system here so don't sneak in!

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 25: [*unintelligible*]

ANGELO FALCON: OK. Vamos a empezar. Let's start on... uh... let's start on this side here. Can you introduce yourself? And, remember, it's two minutes.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 26: [*unintelligible*]

ANGELO FALCON: I... I also would like to remind you: if... if you have written testimony, please give it to uh... Joan Torres or Leticia. I don't know... if they are around, they can raise their hands. OK? [*unintelligible*] submit it to us. Thank you. Please, go ahead.

JIM SAN: Thank you, Sir. Uh... My name is Jim San. I just turned to U.S. citizen this July.

ANGELO FALCON: Congratulations.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JIM SAN: And uh... I'm very proud here. Uh... Not only I enjoy the freedom and democracy here, and also I work for a nonprofit TV station, New Tang Dynasty Television, that echoes the same. Uh... I'm not sure if people knows [*sic*] much about the Chinese community and Chinese media here, but I can give one example, that we do live broadcast translation, with live translation of U.S. presidential election and New York mayor pre... election. And we put out those uh... big screens in the parks and people walk by, a lot of Chinese people walk by: they are very curious. A lot of them has been in this society for long time but they were never exposed to such information. And why? Because there is a power, there is a regime that has [*unintelligible*] so much penetration in this country that it looks like there's a lot of diversity in that market, but the voice is not diversified. And we are trying to bring this diversified voice. And also another thing about our station that make me so proud: we are the only station that broadcast uncensored information to China, uncensored news to China...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JIM SAN: And think about this huge market of China, lot of people, lot of big brands are in China, and why we are the only one who broadcast uncensored information? Because it really took courage to do that.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JIM SAN: And another thing is we are maj... mainly a... a volunteer organization and think about a worldwide network that is maintained and, you know, run basically by

volunteers. I have to go home... I mean, I do my... my job to earn my income and go home to take care of my children, and when everybody go to sleep I find time to work for NTDTV: that's how hard it is for most people working the station. And I'm here to ask the Commissioners and people in... in the society, everyone, to think about the true diversity. It's not just the numbers, it's not how many station that they run, how... how many program that they run like the lady had talked about before: it's the social responsibility, the responsibility to what matters in our hearts, what matters in the community. That's more important and I hope for such operation like our NTDTV and many others that I can see in this uh... in this audience that can... can get support from the Commission...

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

JIM SAN: ... and get our voice really heard.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Please uh... state your name.

FRANCISCO ESTARELLAS: Mi nombre es Francisco Estarellas y por no conocer mucho el hablar el inglés voy a hablar en español.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 27: Sí.

FRANCISCO ESTARELLAS: Nosotros, los latinoamericanos como es el correcto que nos diguenos Latinos tenemos profundamente que quejarnos con los medios de comunicación como la televisión en inglés y en español que casi no anuncian la verdadera cultura de nuestros pueblos que en realidad van a la decadencia y son televisiones que tienen grandes programas dedicados a los actos sexuales de la farándula, ignoran la cultura nuestros países. Hemos...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

FRANCISCO ESTARELLAS: ¡Tenemos que decir que, verdad, hasta nuestros medios [*unintelligible*] de televisado en castellano y español vemos estas fallas de desconocimiento del idioma! Es necesario dejar de desmo... monopolizar las r... las televisiones porque se han concentrado a un monopolio de la estilística económica que sólo sirven a los grandes intereses y dejando a un lado a los pobres, a la gente con menos conocimientos...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

FRANCISCO ESTARELLAS: ... culturales cuando la televisión debe ser para elevar la cultura y los pueblos para enseñar el [*unintelligible*] y las grandes realidades de las naciones. Es sumamente desastroso ver estos [*unintelligible*] y culturales que se

transmiten todos los días y ignorándose las raíces profundas, nuestra verdadera música y nuestra verdadera cultura. Esperamos que la realización que contra las televisiones pongan un lápiz y enseñen a estas televisiones a enseñar cultura, a dejarse [unintelligible] tanto sexo [unintelligible] farándula, queja lo que más se le digan. Muchas gracias.

AUDIENCE: [applause and cheering]

ANGELO FALCON: Roughly, translation is: big media sucks.

AUDIENCE: [laughter]

ANGELO FALCON: Can you state your name?

TOM MURPHY: My name is Tom Murphy from representative...

ANGELO FALCON: Speak up a little.

TOM MURPHY: My name is Tom Murphy from representativepress.org. I wanna say that the marketplace will never serve the interest of... of the American people, will never serve the diversity of opinions and views held by the American people. We need the FCC to set aside several channels as public service channels, as a counterbalance to mainstream media. The solution to concentrated ownership is to establish media... media channels that are free from p... private ownership. The FCC must establish several channels that are mandated to be representative of the general public. Someone brought up ABC. The uh... the biggest while most extreme example of propaganda I've seen was the movie *Path to 9/11*. An example I want to talk about is a criticism that no one in mainstream media pointed out: in *Path to 9/11* it contained a fabricated [unintelligible] quote, which purported to say that the... motive of Al-Qaeda was to convert us to Islam? That's a lie! The motive of Al-Qaeda is to prevent the United States from supporting Israel and supporting other oppressive re... regimes.

AUDIENCE: [applause]

TOM MURPHY: That's why we were attacked! And a lead opinion wants to play a game and suppress why we were attacked. A lead opinion also suppresses illegal activities when it serves a lead interest. I've struggled to get mainstream media to report that the war on Iraq would have been illegal, I've struggled to have them uh... report that the settlements in the occupied territories are illegal. I've contra... I've uh... confronted N.J. Burke: he played it off and says everybody knows! It's a big game and the only answer, like I said, is uh... mandating uh... public service channels. Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ANGELO FALCON: Sta... sta... state you name.

MARIA CUADRADO: Maria Cuadrado, Institute for Puerto Rican Hispanic Elderly. Just a few words...

ANGELO FALCON: I'm not sure, you may not be able to testify, I think you are too short

MARIA CUADRADO: OK.

ANGELO FALCON: *[unintelligible]*

AUDIENCE: *[laughter]*

MARIA CUADRADO: I'll pick it up *[laughter]* OK *[laughter]*

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ANGELO FALCON: There you go...

MARIA CUADRADO: *[unintelligible]* I said, I work for the Institute for Puerto Rican Hispanic Elderly. Need I say that the elderly are totally ignored by the media?

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

MARIA CUADRADO: Information they need never is given out and always what is presented is the youthful 25 year old, fashions...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

MARIA CUADRADO: ... skins for the 25 years old, I mean a creams for the 25 years old to keep their skins stretched nicely! 25 years old, of course. So that the elderly are ignored. Consolidation of the media will only... Further consolidation will only serve to distance them even more from the reality of the population that is out there in the real world. We ask the FCC to really take action against continued consolidation and ensure that the public airwaves remain public. Thank you.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you. Thank you, Maria. Uh... I was joking about the short thing *[unintelligible]*. Next.

JOHN BRINKLEY: Uh... John Brinkley. Uh... Blacks are being whited out on TV and that is a reality. I have some statistics here for you: since 1998 ownership of TV stations by people of color has declined 40%, with the number of stations owned by African Americans declining nearly 30%. That's just since 19... 98. Cities with large Black populations such as New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta have no Black owned TV stations.

Most Black owned television stations do not even operate in African American communities, but instead are concentrated in the Midwest! Black owned stations reach less than 8.7% of the Black population. The percentage of people of color working on local TV stations dropped from 24% in 2001 to 18.1% in 2003. There has been no significant increase in these numbers since 1990. Uh... This is contained in a uh... brochure that has other information that I... I give to the panelist and to the FCC. I represent the Tri State Say it [*sic*] Like It Is Coalition, which...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JOHN BRINKLEY: As a uh... case in point, we just looked at the treatment of the most popular, longest running, Black produced public affairs uh... program that provides real information: the panelist spoke about how uh... our image is projected around the world, how real news that you can use is being subdiverted to buffoonery and uh... no playful entertainment uh... information. Like It Is: we went to... the station. We looked into the public file: there is more than ten feet of files with letters of support, letters saying how great the program is. For other programs there is less than an inch! It's a popular program.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JOHN BRINKLEY: We, as uh... Lisa Davis stated, we sent more than 1,500 letters [*unintelligible*] were signed by people all over the tristate area supporting Like It Is. The station uh... ABC, none of the stations are responsive to the communities that they serve. We ask the FCC to put some weight on them, enforce the public service doctrine that you... enforce the Fairness Doctrine that you have. These stations are out of control! It's your responsibility to get them back into control.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

JOHN BRINKLEY: Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much. Can you state your name?

LETICIA RODRIGUEZ: Good evening, I'm Leticia Rodriguez, representing El Puente, a youth and community development organization...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

LETICIA RODRIGUEZ: ... in Brooklyn. We are pleased that some television stations have made it clear that the city of New York is a majority of people of color, but that message has not gotten to the radio stations and newsrooms who are overwhelmingly white male dominated. We find it difficult to understand that when TV and radio stations are interviewing for national, state, or city policy that there are no Latinos with the understanding knowledge or opinion required for these stations. We are in utter dismay to find top radio and TV stations with virtually no people of color in their stations... in

their stations. We are... we are here this evening because we are proud to have been the first public high school for human rights in America, El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, a nationally recognized public high school dedicated to promoting human rights in one of the top 200 academically achieving school. Our youth have been empowered to believe they can make a difference. The question is: does the FCC believe they can? We see the FCC's presence here tonight as an opportunity to inspire our young people to believe and contribute to our media, our public, our nation. As you already know, Commissioners Jonathan Adelstein and Mar... Michael Copps, there must be an improvement in the way TV and radio stations serve the news and informational needs of people of color, and we appreciate you are here this evening. Diversity of viewpoints, local news coverage and reporting, programming, and Latino representation is not only essential but long, long overdue. Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ANGELO FALCON: Uh... This side?

ANITA HOLLANDER: Hi uh... I'm Anita Hollander, the East Coast National Chair of AFTRA Performers with Disabilities. I represent 54 million Americans with disabilities who reach across all diversity lines, who are virtually invisible in the media. I've been fortunate enough to work myself in radio and TV in New York and Boston, but I am unusual among performers with disabilities. Performers with disabilities... find it hard enough to get employed in general but, when employment becomes more limited due to less local hires, then the prospects for performers AND PEOPLE with disabilities becomes [*sic*] even more bleak. In the media, loss of jobs means loss of voice. We end up with a twofold problem: we have performers with disabilities' voice, which becomes nonexistent, and employment for people with disabilities becoming nonexistent. But this monopoly game does not make any sense in general because when jobs dry up, money drive... dries up, nobody buys anything, the economy fails, capitalism doesn't work, and the country COLLAPSES, as in seventy years ago with the Great Depression. Personally, I trained in college to work in this industry. Now, my daughter wants to go to college and I want to be able to PAY for that by working in the industry, which I trained for and which I have been making a living at. This monopoly is both personally and publicly simply the road to hell.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [applause]

ANGELO FALCON: [*unintelligible*] I feel very depressed. Next.

AUGUSTINA PEREZ: My name is Augusti... My name is Augustina Perez. I'm here to speak on behalf of the 1,800 individuals who signed a petition for the investigation of the Hispanic Latino Broadcasting on their obscenities, profanities, and indecent broadcast.

The broadcast of material on some of these radio stations is despicable, vulgar, and obscene. Case in point, we have El vacilón de la mañana, radio station WSKQ...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

AUGUSTINA PEREZ: This program broadcasts... broadcasted over the public waves is permeated with media molesters and media predators. They have injected their own venomous vocabulary and innuendos! El vacilón de la mañana is five continuous hours of sexual filth. Phone lines are open...

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

AUGUSTINA PEREZ: ... the public is invited to share these discussions and opinions. For example, September 29th, 25 minutes of long, drawn out discussion on how to arouse a woman on bed. On October 16th, a man ca... caller explaining in detailing the act of having sex with a pet monkey and its pleasures. Gentlemen, learning comes from hearing, hearing of the word. Our children, especially our teens, are hearing, learning, and repeating! Where is the serious [*unintelligible*], where is the scientific, where is the political or artistic value in this profanity?

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

AUGUSTINA PEREZ: Their views... their views are that that's how we Hispanics, when we get together, speak and talk and act, that most listeners like this type of programming because it's funny. They are confusing filthiness with funny!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

AUGUSTINA PEREZ: The owners that allow this broadcast on the air, the sponsors that back them up, and these charlatan deejays are only two days judas. In their frenzy for riches, power, popularity, and ratings, they humiliate the dignity of the persons, they humiliate our honor, they sell our dignity and our moral values, and they sell the good virtues, our Hispanic heritage. Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALLISON JOY FAELNAR: Peace...

ANGELO FALCON: Can you state your name?

ALLISON JOY FAELNAR: Peace, my name is Allison Joy Faelnar, and I am the cofounder of Reach Hip-hop, a national organization that strives to utilize hip-hop as uh... a tool for education in social and political justice while fighting for media justice. Uh... We talked earlier at the top of the evening about how the United States now has 300 million

people in it, which is why, I think, that it's very sad that tonight's discussion is completely disregarding the impact that media has on our youth and there are no, or hardly any, youth representatives. Uh... I... love music and I love hip-hop. However, every time I turn on the radio to listen to radio stations that claim they are - quote - where hip-hop lives, I do not recognize the culture I grew up with. All I hear is programming that continues to promote systemic divide and conquer techniques feeding people of color, audiences, mostly youth, a diverse array of internalized racism, sexism, and homophobia. Hip-hop was created and born during a time of oppression and with that oppression came great expression that embodied a whole community that rocked the mike, cut out [unintelligible] turntables, threw out tags, and b-boyed/b-girlled on hard concrete. We took up space when gentrification was pushing us out of our neighborhood.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ALLISON JOY FAELNAR: We told our stories when the mainstream silenced us. This way of expression lifted up our spirits and empowered our community and it was SO powerful that it became more than just an art form, but a culture of RESISTANCE... that uplifted and changed the world. So when I turn on the radio today on radio stations like MS owned Hot 97 or Clear Channel Power 105 that call themselves hip-hop, I don't hear anyone uplifting our communities nor do I think I or other misrepresented people are empowered. All I hear is the dissemination of racist stereotypes and the promotion of misogyny, homophobia, and violence. How do I, as a young person of color, identify with a white owned and run radio station that oppresses and misrepresents our communities? Every day I look at other young people around me and it is quite evident how music has great effects on all of us. All I see is young people disrespecting each other and making jokes about each other's cultures and emulating what they hear.

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start winding down?

ALLISON JOY FAELNAR: Yes. We know that media plays a large role in socialization and we cannot blame only artists who put out this kind of music or deejays that play it, but we must look to the Program Directors, General Managers, and owners of these radio stations that allow it to happen or even encourage these racist jokes, sexist comments, and violence to promote ratings, get paid, and maintain institutionalized power hierarchies. I want to see youth be empowered by hip-hop culture like I know it can be. The ownership of that culture belongs to us and we will reclaim it by any means necessary. We are not asking, we are demanding. And if change does not come, we will take it!

AUDIENCE: [*cheering and applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Please... please state your name.

KAI YU: My name is Kai Yu and I am speaking on behalf of forty community-based organizations, many in this New York region. It is called the Coalition Against Hate Media whose mission is to promote diversity and fair representation in the media. For

several years we have worked a whole broadcaster responsible and accountable for airing messages of hatred and bigotry into our communities. FCC deregulation has allowed big media to grow larger, and has weakened the community's ability to challenge broadcasters and to open a dialogue with them on the local needs and interests of our communities. Instead it has allowed corporate media to ignore our demands to even MEET to resolve incidents in which radio hosts make racist and obscene comments. It has also crowded out minority and women owned media, and limited our choice and ability to inform our constituencies on matters important to our communities. Recently we responded to a Clear Channel owned station in New York City in which DJ Star of the Star and Buc Wild Show threatened violence and sexual molestation of a child, and used anti-Asian slurs. They...

AUDIENCE: [*unintelligible*]

KAI YU: This station is also known for using epithets, again the N word, the B word, etc. DJ Star was fired, but the action was far from sufficient. Clear Channel executives ignored requests to meet with community leaders. They have since not been held accountable for hiring DJ Star who is known for hatred and bigotry. In another incident several years ago, these host [*sic*] called a South-Asian woman a filthy rat eater, a bitch, and threatened to choke the F out of her on the air. The...

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start winding down?

KAI YU: ... the company has not been held responsible or accountable for the years in which they have denigrated minorities and women over the air. We urge the FCC to reinstate policies that would compel companies to meet with community leaders, to strengthen mechanisms that allow the community to challenge broadcast licenses, and to increase the penalties for FCC violations. There is precedents for this in FCC rules and regulations. Moreover, we urge you to foster increased minority ownership by women and minorities. In closing, to access... access to diverse sources of information is the foundation of a democratic society, so we urge you to foster diversity and localism in the broadcast media. We... The FCC must fulfill its mandate to ensure that media companies use the public airwaves for the public interest. Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Can you please state your name?

WINN WALKER: The name is **Winn Walker** representing the Critical Thinkers Association. I was born in the Caribbean, grew up thinking I was a West Indian, but my love for history taught me a whole lot: it taught me some truth. We are not Indians and we are not West Indians: we are Africans in the West.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 28: That's right.

WINN WALKER: When I hear people use any term today - Latino, Hispanic, niggers - is all the same! It has nothing to do with who these people are. The Latino pop... the people who consider themselves Latino and Hispanics are the... the... the true citizens of this region! When you see this immigrant in coming through here, the... the last coming in Texas are [*unintelligible*] new immigrant, these are the native people! These [*unintelligible*] family [*unintelligible*] coming here.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

WINN WALKER: The media report this, we all use this colonial mentality that the media express. Ever since colonialism, we've been having the same nonsense. Is now getting tighter and tighter around us. If we look around today at media control, I always thought the FCC was a fear-minded organization! FC[*audio interrupted*]

New York City Town Hall Meeting
October 19, 2006
Hunter College Kaye Playhouse
(Transcript)
(Part 3)

[The first five minutes of this CD # 3 are a copy of the last five minutes of CD # 2]

WINN WALKER: FCC is only fear where it comes... concerns big money. They got controlled by the big money. This is why conglomerates control the media whether it is press, TV, radio. FCC is part in *[unintelligible]*. We hope it will be different, but it can only be different when the people take control. And this go from the government down: the people have to take control. This is not a democracy! This is *[unintelligible]* this is a democracy. Again, you believed in media and *[unintelligible]* that they give you. Elections coming along: it's a democratic right to go and rule... to... to go and vote, and the vote is not counted and all this kind of nonsense is a whole crap... look. All right.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 29: *[laughter]*

WINN WALKER: The media control the minds of the people, right?

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start winding down?

WINN WALKER: Yes. OK. The media control the minds of the people so much that the biggest disaster in this country took place in New York. We still have to believe that Al-Qaeda or some foreign people came here and do it when this was an inside job. The media is not explaining it to any people!

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

WINN WALKER: The country is spending something like - what? - a billion dollar a month for what is happening in Iraq. The media is not exposing this? No. FCC as a controlling factor must take control unless the... we...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

WINN WALKER: ... unless we stay in this *[unintelligible]*. The colonial mentality and the FCC must be changed. Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ALLY MCLAIN: Greetings.

ANGELO FALCON: Please... please state your name.

ALLY MCLAINE: Greetings. Uh... My name is Ally McLaine, I'm a candidate for Congress, running for Congress in the eleventh congressional district in Brooklyn.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ALLY MCLAINE: I would like to say: prior to the pri... Democratic primary of September 12th, the candidates were ALL on the media. Those candidates that ran in the democratic primary, they were on the TV, they were on the radios, they were everywhere. Since the primary, where we have... - I would just like to interject that we had a Governor and a Mayor that called certain one of them the Congresspersons. Since that time... when there was a mix-up because I was on the ballot BEFORE the primary as an independent, the community drafted me to run because they felt that I have their vision, I know what it is that they need, I lived forty years in this district, and I have represented them on many occasions. Since that time, all media has SHUT DOWN for Ally McLaine. Those candidates, they were on Channel 4, they were on Channel 7, they were on LIB, they were on W... uh... they were on Kiss FM and... other stations. The community have written FCC many letters asking them to open the airwaves TO THEM because they feel that my candidacy will represent them. That has never happened! I'm here now to ask you, cause I'm really disappointed that the other members of the FCC are not here to hear what the people have to say. These are our airwaves: you might own the stations, but these are our airwaves and we must have access. Whoever control the media control the vision, and we cannot let that happen. We MUST have you open the airwaves for free and open discussion as it should be. I thank you very much.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ANGELO FALCON: Please state you name?

SAUL MCKANTS: My name is Saul McKants. I'm first a parent, I'm an educator - even though the Board of Ed. will never hire me cause I teach the truth...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 30: *[laughter]*

SAUL MCKANTS: All right? I also am a lifelong Met fan so tonight me being here is very important to give up that game...

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 31: That's right, that's right.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 32: *[laughter]*

SAUL MCKANTS: ... so please I need you to take out your notes cause I'm gonna go on to what media conglomeration is, all right? NBC, which owns MSN, which owns Hotmail, all right? You had a lady here talking this crap about stuff on the Internet? Well, if you're poor, you... your e-mail is gonna be in a library. MSN has the contract for e... People have e-mails, and students that have e-mails in the library, and are paid by the government. OK? Two: Bloomberg on Channel 7, on everywhere else, he has his little [*unintelligible*] running [*unintelligible*] even though he's the mayor, he's still... That's part of the media. Three: ABC, OK? Now that we've got a few of the big ones in there... We had the trial of Lynne Stewart: I was there at the sentencing, OK? Uh... The media tries to manufacture and is being left out voices that are critical, and think properly, and don't look thuggish when you ask for an opinion on the news. That's why when you see a story in the news uh... you see the story took place during the daytime, but they found a person it looks like is nighttime because they had to find a hip-hop that... that was dropping out of school and can't talk properly and will manufacture consent for the opinions... and so on. I meant to leave out Giuliani and what the media has done is when Giuliani... all these people in these big cause didn't want to see any Black people squeegeeing their windows, he made them disappear. The media is beginning to follow suit. OK? That's what... that mentality is that you are seeing. So you don't see us in the media. I was... S... Somebody has turned the... the reporters on the media ask their question, answer a question about the trial. Once I said: "This trial was bogus charges. Why don't you do an investigative report in the money the government wasted and didn't spend on New York City schools?" The mike was turned off. Now, I have no other way to do because MS...

ANGELO FALCON: Please [*unintelligible*] Wrap it up.

SAUL MCKANTS: I'm wrapping it up! MSN has censored my e-mail, cut it off for political content for 50 people on my list who are part of my PTA: that's media conglomeration and that's the illegality. And, plus, their attorney says that corporations don't have to abide by the First Amendment: I've got a problem with that! I'm a son of a vet, my father is in a grave fighting for this country, and we've got people talking about the First Amendment don't count for corporations? Tax dollars: I'm a taxpayer, elections coming and, believe me, I'm walking the street: I'm a New Yorker, all right? And 9/11 was an inside job, as far as I'm concerned.

AUDIENCE: [*applause and giggling*]

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you. Thank you. Please state your name.

MARIELA ROSARIO: Hello, my name is Mariela Rosario, I'm representing the Manhattan Neighborhood Network Youth Channel. Since its inception in March of 2000, the Youth Channel has changed hundreds of young people through the metropolitan area Media, Literacy, and Production. By collaborating with youth based organizations, public schools, and cultural institutions, we've become a hub for youth produced media and a national leader in education with regards to media ownership, [*unintelligible*] and production. Our youth produced programming centers on important and timely social issues such as immigration, sexual health, and incarceration. And we've received local

and national recognition. Youth Channel prepares the next generation of New Yorkers to be media producers and analysts, and not just passive consumers. The Youth Channel is slated to become the first channel ever created in the United States where media made by youth, for youth would air 24/7. Unfortunately this vision has been held back to proba... programming block of 17 hours a week on Time Warner... Channel 34 and RCN 83 in Manhattan. Youth Channel is still in pursuit of its original goal and would like to obtain a fifth channel for public access television in New York that would house youth produced programming. This youth channel would be accessible to ALL New York City residents and would serve to inform, educate, and entertain the youth of the city as well as... as chain them in producing content for the channel. Only local media like public access and community ra... radio have proven to be accessible tools for our marginalized communities to get their voices heard. There has been much discussion about creating media opportunities for disenfranchised communities, and we cannot afford to forget our youth. Many of them represent these very communities and stand to lose the most as this digital divide widens. A greater commitment needs to be made so that public schools gain and are able to sustain broadband capabilities and equipment that propel students into the digital and information age. Students should be taught how to think analytically and critically about this media. We... we should not feel powerless over our representation in the media, and we need to see rec... reflections of ourselves that we can relate to and understands. And New York youth are inundated...

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start... winding down?

MARIELA ROSARIO: Yeah. This is my last... couple of sentences. *[laughter]*

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you. Sorry! Sorry!

MARIELA ROSARIO: And New York youth are inundated in an ever more cluttered visual environment, and the media plays a crucial and vital roles in our lives. It is in the public interest to listen profoundly to us and to our vision of tomorrow. The media provides the platform for debate and exchange: with all this consolidation there has been a corresponding decrease in public access to airwaves. As a result, youth, minorities, and women are all shut out o... of America's most powerful industry. Broadcasters have an obligation to provide a space where everyone can have input into our public discourse. Before a policy is set in stone that will impact the next generation, we hope that the FCC seeks to include their voice in framing this debate with regards to media ownership and representation.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you. Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ANGELO FALCON: Please state your name.

ANA LOURDES OF ARANGACAO: Good evening, everyone, my name is Ana Lourdes of Arangacao, I am a Brazilian and, therefore, a very proud Latina. Uh... I'm coming here

uh... to testify my difficulties in po... portraiting [sic] my community in a very monopolized market. I've... I've been... I had trained uh... with the community access television, and I just want to testify like the importance of the community access television to train and help people of color or different nationalities to give true uh... portraits of their community to... to the community in a whole. Uh... I would like to uh... make you aware that big Brazilian channels are coming here and also like... impoverishing our communities of... of independent producers by taking our market away and basically transforming the independent... independent producers into their like uh... publicity uh... companies uh... Only like instead of producing content, we are becoming people that uh... produce commercials for this big uh... channel. I'm going to mention here Hedgeglobal f... televi... vi... uh... HedgeglobalTV and also record that is owned by a big uh... religious group in Brazil. Uh... I also want to... like thank you... you for this opportunity and tell you about your responsibility of making this work here in America because, as you know, other undeveloping uh... countries (and developing countries) follow your trends and y... whatever you can make here... And when you... you have a big, big, big responsibility of really fulfilling the... the rights o... human rights and civil rights, and I hope that you can make it because otherwise unde... uh... developing countries will lose also their hope in several things. We... you know, it's good to have your example to look upon.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

ANA LOURDES OF ARANGACAO: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ANGELO FALCON: Can you state your name?

BILLY BABY: Uh... the name is Billy Baby. Uh... my concern is not just with the media: my concern is with our human species. We have always been at war with each other, we kill each other, and on our planet we are polluting and we are cancering each other more, and more, and more every single day. On the media, who is being held accountable for this? As much as I know, no one. We've got a criminal in the White House: I never heard the word criminal here tonight. We've got a criminal in the White House. I'm going to give DOCUMENTATION about why this guy is guilty of being a war criminal and why he should be in jail right now.

ANGELO FALCON: You... you know, you only have two minutes. Sounds... like it may be longer...

AUDIENCE: *[laughter and murmuring]*

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 33: *[laughter]*

BILLY BABY: OK... *[clearing his voice]* There's a book out. It's in your libraries. It's called "American Dynasty". It's by a guy named Kevin Phillips. It's a history of the Bush

family. The Bush family, his grandfather, and his father were partners with Adolf Hitler! It took Hitler many years to get into power and every single year the Bush family gave him A MILLION DOLLARS! Why isn't that on the networks? Why isn't this guy impeached and put on trial and, when found guilty, be put in jail. You've got this information in your brain: spread it all over the United States and all over the planet. If we don't do this, the only people we can blame is ourselves what's happening. We...

ANGELO FALCON: Start wrapping up [*unintelligible*]

BILLY BABY: We cannot last on a planet that's polluted with all the weapons we got. We've got about just only 50% of the forest that we used to have 150 years ago. We've got a media monopoly with God damned criminals in the media monopoly: everybody from ABC and CBS are basically mentally ENSLAVED!

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you! I think that's good enough to end on. Thank you very much. Uh... You ran out of time [*unintelligible*]. Thank you!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Can you state your name, please?

LISA BURRESS: Hi, I'm **Lisa Burress**, I have a headache, and I'm the Director for Organizing for public housing residents of the Low East Side, a project of GOLES (Good Old Low East Side). Uh... Yes, I have a headache and I'm still here tonight because uh... I'm at work and my job is harder because I work with public housing residents. And uh... w... - You can't hear me? Oh. - A lot of time when I say public housing, people got images in their heads, right? And none of them are positive because the media is filled with negative images of public housing. And while public housing is at risk, on a city, state, and federal level we are losing funding! We've reached out to popular news stations and newspapers, and they refuse or just... just seem... Our... our... our issues take a back seat. What's more important is, you know, what Britney Spears is wearing and, you know, what party to go to next. I'm here because we have a campaign called The Public Media and Print [*unintelligible*] Campaign: we use that to dispel those negative images, perpetuate positive images of people, to challenge those horrible perceptions that people have of people in public housing, and to also educate residents. Thanks to public access, especially Manhattan N... Neighborhood Network, we've been able to do that. They have been uh... they've just been indispensable in our... in our initiatives towards changing... changing these negative re... uh... images of people uh... residents of public housing, and I appreciate them. Uh... I... I have a headache, I c... I d... I have so many things to say and I [*unintelligible*] repeating everything. I... I applaud everyone for coming here and we should just boycott. If... if... if the... if the FCC doesn't want to uh... do its job, we should boycott! Tucked into every... in between every one of those media platforms is A COMMERCIAL. And we are not hitting them where their pockets... Or you know what? We are not hitting them where it hurts and that's in their pockets. Letters don't hurt them, right? You can see hundreds of letters and petitions don't... don't help anything so

let's start... let's start doing real action, let's start - like people said - make... make Program Directors accountable: boycott... boycott these corporations!

AUDIENCE: [*applause and cheering*]

LISA BURRESS: Right!

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start...

LISA BURRESS: Nobody voices [*unintelligible*] Don't go to Dunkin Donuts. These are different things [*unintelligible*]

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start winding down? Your t... You are running out of time.

LISA BURRESS: OK. And... and also this is a scary moment too for me because the FCC is trying to change uh... the direction of commu... the commu... the communication industry as a whole! Uh... just last year they did uh... they revamped how they do their broadcast with DSL and now they are allowing te... telephone companies to do the same thing that uh... Internet service do... Intern... Internet services do, so let's... A gentleman has said before me uh... Inter... ISPs like Earthlink, they are gonna be... they are gonna be out of business soon cause, while they overcharge... overcharge people, Verizon has the luxury to... to... to... to... to have lower prices and, by the end of the... by... by that time, they are gonna get rid of companies like that. So that... that's just... that's what telecommunications is and... and now we are talking about the media for broadcasting.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

LISA BURRESS: I'm very nervous. Thank you [*unintelligible*]

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: State your name... state your name please?

PAULA ZIMMERMAN TAYLOR: Hi, my name is Paula Zimmerman Taylor, I'm an independent producer trained by Manhattan Neighborhood Network. As this country moves towards a theocracy or dictatorship, it is vital to hear local, diverse points of view. The media is the lifeline of our communities, the way information comes to us, and the way we, especially creative artists, express ourselves. Now, since habeas corpus... the rite of habeas corpus has been destroyed, we must express ourselves as long as we are free and also be the voice for those in prison. Marketers and affiliates, in their rush and greed to sell brands, are breeding, and homogenizing, and brainwashing young people so they will never think for themselves: they are being bombarded by useless information, which is robbing their souls. As an independent woman... woman producer I am horrified by the

lack of opportunity not only to make a living in this completely biased media climate, but also to get my work shown and distributed on any media outlets. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 34: [*unintelligible*]

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: State your name, please?

NIA BEDIAKO: Good evening, my name is Nia Bediako. I am Chair of the WBAI's local station Board Programming Committee. I just like to say that WBAI is a WONDERFUL sanctuary for independent voices to be heard. I... I understand it is not perfect. I'm not paid by WBAI, I'm just a twenty years listener, and I'm the Chair of the Programming Committee. There were some things said tonight that were absolutely... - well, let me [*unintelligible*] absolutely - some of it was just not - like the woman said from ABC - not right: we need to get it right! I can tell you that I saw the grid, it was at an open forum like... if you... if you are familiar with WBAI, you know things are very open. It is absolutely NOT TRUE that Latino programming, whatever that is... pertaining Latino issues, will be cut. There was an increase and I am speaking the truth. And, by the way, I am 50% Latina so I just like to put that on the record. Also - I know I only have a minute that uh... - the woman said is it about Like It Is. Like It Is is a wonderful program, it tells my story, and I would like to have it kept on the air. It is like a crack in the Berlin wall where we can get the truth out of a mainstream media that does not tell what the truth is... it doesn't get it right to use your colleagues phrase there so, please, I am willing to have a dialogue with that woman, I wish if she were here... I can't see that far but I'm sitting in the corner: she is more than [*unintelligible*] to come and speak with me, and I will tell her, I will show her, I will make... I will reach out to her that way. But please, FCC, do not besmirch WBAI. We need WBAI. I can guarantee that 80% of the people that sat in this auditorium tonight heard about this on WBAI. DO NOT do that! Please, I beg you.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: [*unintelligible*] Uh... state your name?

JONATHAN GLASS: Hi. Hi. Good evening, my name is Jonathan Glass, I am a Vice President with Council Tree Communications. We are a media te... and telecom investor who uh... ha... is an investor in a minority owned broadcaster in Philadelphia, WWSI, uh... which is a Spanish language station and an affiliate of Telemundo. With... wireless networks and spectrum becoming an increasing and growing component of content distribution, we are deeply concerned about the lack of minority ownership of wireless spectrum. Uh... as an example of this, if you look to the FCC's recent auction 66, which raised 13.7 billion dollars for the U.S. government, there were two minority owned bidders listed as qualified bidders and two woman owned businesses listed as uh... qualified bidders: and just one single woman owned business was a winner of \$385,000 of spectrum in a 13.7 billion dollar auction. Uh... I think the FCC really needs to focus on

ways to encourage ownership both on the media side and the wireless side for minorities uh... and small businesses where small businesses were just 4% of the dollar value of auction 66. Thank you very much. And one other point I'd like to raise is: I think these meetings are really great, but they are not very well publicized on the FCC website. Uh... you know, we... uh... the Los... Los Angeles one, I heard last night on Bill Moyers' show, that it was only three days before the actual uh... forum that there was any information about it. And we happened upon a press release, which... of... of this particular meeting. I think, going forward, the next ten meetings across the country, or whatever its going to be, need to be uh... put up on the FCC website, which is a great website, and... Thank you very much and thanks for...

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

JONATHAN GLASS: ... hearing us out at this [*unintelligible*] hour.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you. A... Also, if uh... anybody... Is there anybody here who is sitting down who wishes also to testify? If you could, just get on line and... and we'll take it from there, OK? Anybody else? OK. Good.

ED MARSHALL: OK. Uh...

ANGELO FALCON: State your name... state your name, please?

ED MARSHALL: My name is **Ed Marshall**, I'm with the Tri State Like It Is Support Coalition. And... and my... my reason for being here... And first of all, I want to thank you, Commissioner Copp [*sic*], and I want to thank Commissioner Adelstein who we have met before at St. John's University and we've discussed our issues. Now, the Like It Is Support Coalition is based in Newark, New Jersey: I live and work in New York... New York City so I go out there to be with people who are actually functioning and trying to get things done and to reverse the trend. One thing that we developed was this pamphlet, and it sort of covers some of the information and some of the concerns that are genuine. But one thing we asked is the question: "Who owns the airwaves?" And we say: "You do! The general public does!" Uh... the airwaves or spectrum are what radio and TV stations use to broadcast to your radio or TV. The airwaves belong to you in the same way that your sidewalks or parks do: they are public resource, OK? That's fine. But then at the very bottom and I w... I bore witness to this uh... we have something that Richard Parson said on public television. He was at New York University Law School and he was asked the question in reference... in reference to who owns the airwaves: and his statement was... that IN THEORY the public... that is, I'll say it again - quote - IN THEORY the public owns the airwaves - unquote. He's thinking as... Now here... here you have Richard Parson, the Chief Executive... s... Chief Executive Officer of - OK - Time Warner and this to him, as any other head of a major corporation that controls the airwaves, is a THEORY! Now, what makes it a theory? And that's something for you to ponder, Commissioner Cops: what makes it a theory to them? You can't do this job by yourself. I've seen you on C-SPAN, I've seen you on other panels. It's something that you are only 20% of that vote at the Commission, but I... I think you've heard enough tonight to

understand that you have a job and have a responsibility. And the focus is on you and Commissioner Adelstein to get the job done because... America is going to hell in a wastebasket, that's what just happening, OK?

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

ED MARSHALL: Thank you very much.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you.

C. HERBERT OLIVER: My name is Reverend C...

ANGELO FALCON: State... State your name.

C. HERBERT OLIVER: My name is Reverend C. Herbert Oliver.

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

C. HERBERT OLIVER: I am... from Birmingham, Alabama. I was jailed in 1948 by Bull Connor in Birmingham, Alabama, for allowing White people to come into a church that I was serving. I had to leave Birmingham because the clan controlled the city and the clan controlled the police department. I was jailed again in 1961, taken out of my house... house, charged with vagrancy when I was a fulltime pastor, kept in jail overnight, let out the next day, uh... very much shaken up. My family was shaken up, disturbed. I lived through all that took place in Birmingham, the changes that took place there: I was through it all, came to New York, served the Presbyterian church here, was involved in the Ocean Hill Brownsville struggle...

AUDIENCE: *[applause]*

C. HERBERT OLIVER: ... and I know what community control is all about. And in 19... or rather in 2004, Bush finally came around to admit uh... that he supported community control, only 38 years late!

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 35: *[laughter]*

C. HERBERT OLIVER: I'm uh... very disturbed about... the media... and the role of the FCC. The media is not telling the people the truth: they have not told the truth about what happened in... on 9/11. Uh... It's so obvious, it's so clear what happened: Bin Laden and a few people with... with box cutters cannot do that uh... what... all this damage uh... that was done. Our country is not that weak. I remember and I have the videos of Louis Young interviewing a woman and there was a large explosion and then the tower came down. And then there was another building, number 7, that came down, and it was not even hit but it imploded and came down: no examination of that yet by the news media.

So the truth is not being told up to today. I'm here today to say I'm supporting **Ally McLaine** in her race in the... in... in Brooklyn.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

C. HERBERT OLIVER: And I'm very disappointed that she has not been able to get on the uh... radio or the TV to tell her story.

ANGELO FALCON: Can you start winding down cause you are running out of time?

C. HERBERT OLIVER: Just winding down now.

ANGELO FALCON: [*laughter*]

C. HERBERT OLIVER: She has not been able to tell her story. She is running for a Federal office. She should have a chance to tell her story, so I'm here to support her and to say uh... make it possible that she too can tell her story along with all of the other candidates. All should be heard and she should be heard as well. Too bad we didn't listen to this gentleman here. He was saying things that we need to hear: we don't like to hear it, but we need to hear it if we are going to have a country! We need to face the realities that... that... uh... the reality of what he was talking about: look at it, and deal with it, and face the truth as the Founding Fathers faced some of the truth - they didn't face the whole truth but they faced some of the truth, they fought for freedom for themselves. I could talk a lot of that but I'll conclude my remarks [*unintelligible*] thank you [*unintelligible*]

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Sir, state your name.

WILBERT CORNAGAY: Good evening, uh... Commissioners and distinguished audience. I have really been impressed with uh... the intelligence, the quality of... of the things uh... the people had to say, and you need to put this on the road and take it all over the country.

ANGELO FALCON: OK, state... state your name also.

WILBERT CORNAGAY: **Wilbert Cornagay**, I'm a member of the Like It is Coalition from Newark, New Jersey, and uh... I'm also President of the [*unintelligible*] Southward Improvement Association and we are fighting for construction jobs in the city of Newark and in the state of New Jersey. And that's something you very seldom see on the evening news! You feld... you s... very seldom see that there are laws on the book with HUD - H U do... [*sic*] D - Housing and Urban Development and the Newark Housing Authority that states that 30% of the w... workers on their construction and development projects must

be Newark Housing Authority TENANTS! On November 8th, a Saturday, of '04 I demonstrated at their **Payston** Avenue townhouse project and they had... one resident, a Black guard, that's all! Everybody else was immigrants and we are not against immigrants: we are for immigrants rights, cause if you are not, you are going to drive the immigrants deeper underground and wages lower, so we support immigrants rights but... that law should be enforced by the Newark Housing Authority, by the U.S. Senators Lautenberg and now U.S. Senator G... Robert Menendez, and by the Congressman of the District, Donald Payne, to make sure that those 30% Newark Housing... Authority tenants are employed! And I w... so wish the FCC would show or illustrate by their programming that uh... the [*unintelligible*] overture did exist, [*unintelligible*] did exist, [*unintelligible*] did exist, and through his maneuvering Africa ceased to be a... a continent of colonies.

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much [*unintelligible*] you're running uh... running out of time.

WILBERT CORNAGAY: T... that's it. I ran out? Thank you.

ANGELO FALCON: OK. Thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

ANGELO FALCON: Uh... Is there one more? This will be our last uh... presenter?

FRANK BLANCK: Yeah. Uh... I... I just want to say I wish...

ANGELO FALCON: Can you state your name, please?

FRANK BLANCK: Oh, **Frank Blanck**. Uh... I just want to say I... I wish I could watch more than one new show on TV. That's all. [*laughter*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 36: [*laughter*]

ANGELO FALCON: Thank you very much. Uh... let me thank you all very much and especially all the... the uh... the people that stuck with us uh... till the very end, and the panelists and Commissioner, thank you very much! Uh... let me turn the proceedings over to uh... Marta Garcia uh... so she could basically uh... thank all of you and close out the... the session. Marta?

MARTA GARCIA: [*unintelligible*] Yes, of course. Uh... again, for those of you that are left in the audience, this has been, as I uh... said at the very beginning, an incredible and remarkable night. I want to l... leave uh... the uh... rest of the remaining uh... minutes that we have here to uh... our... wonderful uh... d... [*laughing*] I call... we call him dissident Commissioner [*laughing*], Michael Copps. Commissioner?

MICHAEL COPPS: Thank you, thank you. Is this on?

MARTA GARCIA: I... They might have... You... Would you mind coming [*unintelligible*]

MICHAEL COPPS: It's on? OK. I just want to uh... thank everybody for coming out tonight: we've got a lot of information, a lot of concern, a lot of frustration, a lot of determination to see something done here. How is it going to get done? A lot of people are looking at the FCC. I wouldn't be at the FCC if I didn't think we can do some of these things on the FCC, but it can't be done with two Commissioners and we don't have enough minority ownership at the FCC either: we are 40% of the FCC. It's uh... uh... supposedly a democratic institution: to that extent who has got the three votes really rules, but I... I can say this: if the concerns I see here tonight are really mobilized - and I've seen them all around this country of ours, in every corner of this country of ours - mobilized and sent into battle, I think we can make a difference, but this isn't the end, I hope, of your participation in this debate. If we are going to be successful, this is only the beginning because, just as I'm trying to reach out and Commissioner Adelstein is trying to reach out, you feel strongly about this, you got to reach out too. All these groups that sponsored this uh... tonight uh... are reaching out, and working overtime, and working 24/7 on this. You've got to do... you've got to do that too. This is a steep, steep climb, this issue. It's a very difficult issue because there are very powerful forces arrayed on the other side for whatever their motives may be, very powerful forces. But I'm still a uh... a small d democrat and I think if we can really mobilize these concerns at the grassroots levels - you talk to your friends, you talk to your neighbors, you talk to talk radio, you try to write up, and you do everything you can to reach out - that gets to the FCC, that gets to the Congress, that gets to decision-makers, it even gets to the national media if we can really play this right and bring it to their attention. It gets to the Internet community - somebody mentioned tonight about the future of the Internet and their concerns that some of these ills that have been visited by consolidation on media maybe are gonna be visited on the... on the Internet now by lack of network neutrality. There's millions of people who are concerned about that. But if it gonna make a difference they are gonna have to really get proactive about it, so... I appreciate your proactivity, I appreciate you all coming out tonight. We will make sure this is all a uh... part of the record of the FCC, and we uh... look forward to visiting with you again, and we thank you very much.

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

MARTA GARCIA: It's you who have to be thanked as well as the wonderful panelist that stayed throughout the night to hear all of your voices. Again, this is a uh... your voices were heard, and they were heard and... and... and taped, so this will be transcribed and will be part of the permanent commonents... comments rather that will be submitted uh... to the FCC in a couple of weeks. Again, thank you and get home safely and stay engaged!

AUDIENCE: [*applause*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 37: Great, that you guys [*unintelligible*] actually... you actually are the only media a lot of people [*unintelligible*]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON 38: [*unintelligible*]